LEAR'S ILLUSTRATED EXCURSIONS IN ITALY


18 78
CHARLES ARTHUR WYNNE FINCH

LEAR $650.-

ILLUSTRATED EXCURSIONS

IN

ITALY.

" The province of Abruzzo, unfrequented by the generality of travellers, and unknown even to the inhabitants of the neighbouring districts, like Sicily, has been represented as a country uncivilized with regard to society, infested by robbers, inaccessible from mountains, and fitter for the residence of wild beasts than of rational beings. But I must here repeat with gratitude, that in these remote and unfrequented tracts we meet with that genuine and cordial hospitality, which is too seldom to be found in more favoured and more populous countries ; and such as I shall for ever call to mind with pleasure and grateful remembrance."

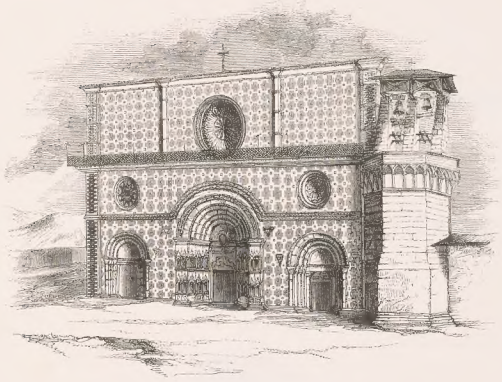
SIR R. C. HOARE. *Classical Tour through Italy*, vol. i. p. 377.

ILLUSTRATED EXCURSIONS

IN

ITALY.

BY EDWARD LEAR.



S. MARIA DI COLLEMAGGIO. AQUILA.

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TO

THE RIGHT HON. EDWARD EARL OF DERBY, K. G.,

ETC., ETC.,

THIS VOLUME

IS MOST RESPECTFULLY AND GRATEFULLY INSCRIBED

BY

THE AUTHOR.

PREFACE.

In offering this Volume to the Public, it is almost necessary to state, that its object is the illustration of a part of Italy which, though nowise inferior in interest to those portions of that country so commonly visited, has hitherto attracted but little attention. With the exception of the Tours by Sir R. Colt Hoare, Bart., and the Honourable Keppel Craven, I am not aware of any published account of the Abruzzi provinces in English; and the drawings with which the following pages are illustrated are, I believe, the first hitherto given of a part of Central Italy as romantic as it is unfrequented.

I would beg the indulgence of the Public towards the literary portion of the Work, which I have thought it right to print with little alteration from my own journals written during my rambles, adding only such historical and other information concerning the places visited, as I have sought for in various Authors. Much yet remains to be explored and illustrated throughout the northern provinces of the kingdom of Naples, and so far from this Volume containing a full account of that interesting country, I should wish it to be regarded as a suggestion for the more careful observation of future and abler Tourists.

I have executed the whole of the Lithographic drawings from my own sketches, and have endeavoured to preserve a close fidelity to the Originals. The Vignettes are also by my own hand, excepting the Architectural subjects, which were transferred to the wood from my sketches by Mr. R. Branston.

To those Ladies, to whose kindness I owe the arrangement of the Airs given at the end of the Volume, my best thanks are due; but I regret, that, owing to the difficulty of writing correctly such music as is only retained by ear, the Appendix is less perfect than I could have wished.

The Lithographic Drawings have been printed at the establishment of Messrs. Hullmandel and Walton. To those Gentlemen, and to the various Artists by whom my drawings on wood have been engraved, as well as to Messrs. Bentley and Co., Printers, I am desirous of expressing my thanks for the care bestowed on their several departments.

During a long residence in Italy, I have had opportunities of collecting numerous illustrations of scenery little known in England, especially of that in the near neighbourhood of Rome; and should the present Volume meet with the approbation of the Public, a second series of Excursions may be anticipated at some future period.

Edward Lear.

27, Duke Street, St. James's,
April, 1846.

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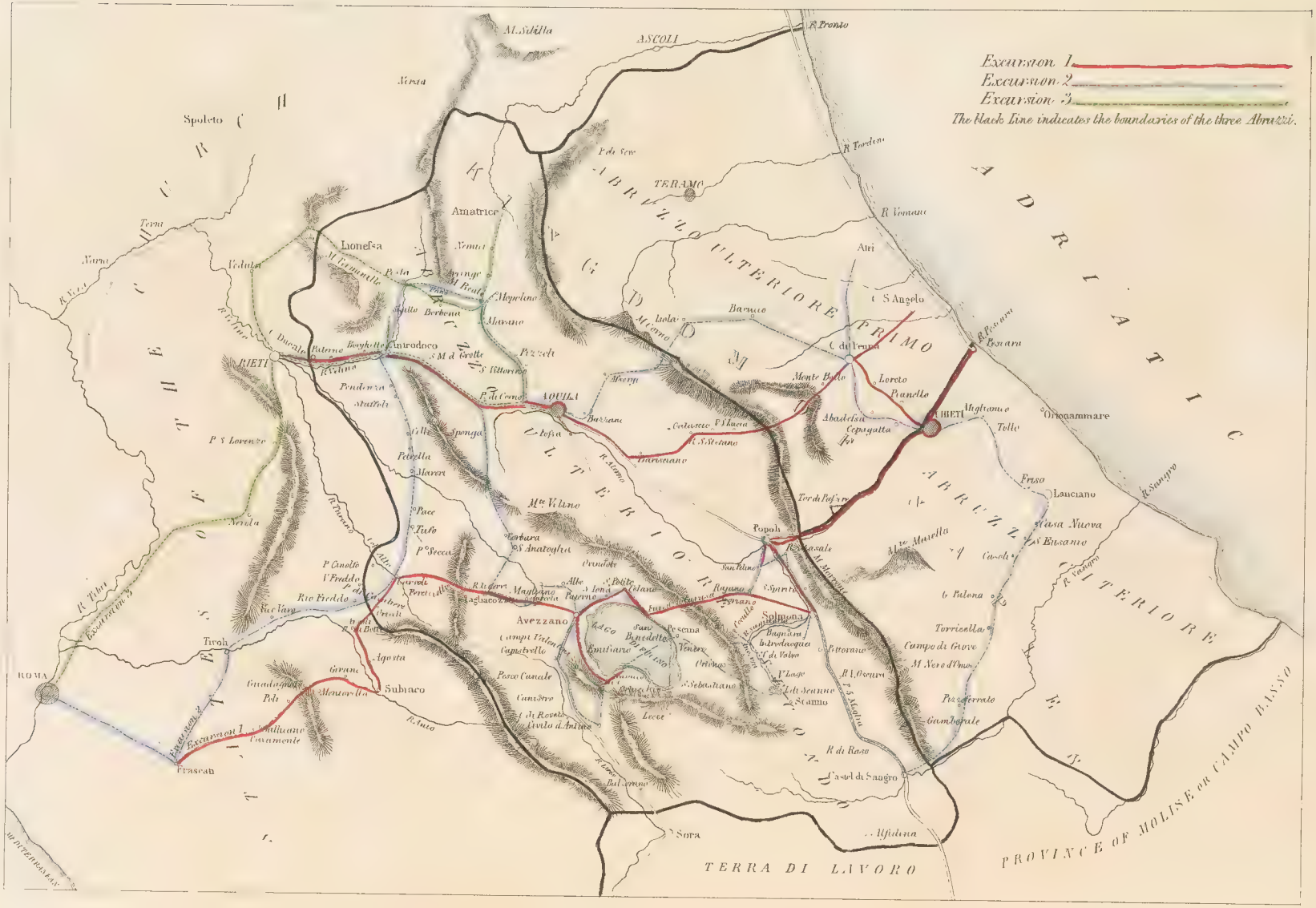
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MAP OF THE THREE ABRUZZI.


Excursion 1.
Excursion 2.
Excursion 3.
The black line indicates the boundaries of the three Abruzzi.
ABRUZZO ULTERIORE PRIMO
ABRUZZO ULTERIORE SECONDO
ABRUZZO ULTERIORE TERZO
ABRUZZO CITERIORE
ADRIATIC
TERRA DI LAVORO
PROVINCE OF MOLISE OR CAMPO BASSO
ROMA
ASCOLI
TERAMO
AQUILA
RIETI
SULMONA
Spoleto
Amatrice
Leonessa
Atri
Penne
Popoli
Avezzano
Subiaco
Tivoli
Tivoli d'Antica
Frascati
Sora
Isernia
Lanciano
Vasto
Ortona
Pescara
Chieti
Casel di Sangro
Monte Corno
Monte Velino
Monte Majella
Monte Amaro
Monte Pallano
Monte Marella
Monte Pizzuto
Monte Porrara
Monte Cavallo
Monte Sirente
Monte Sibilla
Monte Gennaro
Monte Genzano
Monte Cerro
Monte Cornacchia
Monte Corvo
Monte Secco
Monte Velano
Monte Vigliano
Monte Rotondo
Monte Rocca
Monte Rocca Canale
Monte Rocca Cinquemiglia
Monte Rocca Morice
Monte Rocca Pia
Monte Rocca Prefetta
Monte Rocca Romana
Monte Rocca Sinibalda
Monte Rocca Vecchia
Monte Rocca di Botte
Monte Rocca di Cambio
Monte Rocca di Corno
Monte Rocca di Mezzo
Monte Rocca di Papa
Monte Rocca di Vivo
Monte Rocca di Vivo Vecchio
Monte Rocca di Vivo Nuovo
Monte Rocca di Vivo Piccolo
Monte Rocca di Vivo Grande
Monte Rocca di Vivo Medio
Monte Rocca di Vivo Alto
Monte Rocca di Vivo Basso
Monte Rocca di Vivo Superiore
Monte Rocca di Vivo Inferiore
Monte Rocca di Vivo Centrale
Monte Rocca di Vivo Orientale
Monte Rocca di Vivo Occidentale
Monte Rocca di Vivo Settentrionale
Monte Rocca di Vivo Meridionale
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Monte Rocca di Vivo Ovest-Sud-Ovest-Sud-Ovest-Sud-Ovest

ILLUSTRATED EXCURSIONS

IN

ITALY.

No. I.

IN THE KINGDOM OF NAPLES, 1843.

JULY 26th, 1843.—It was not without experiencing many delays that we were at last enabled to begin our long-proposed tour in the Abruzzi, or three Northern provinces of the kingdom of Naples.

The plan arranged was, first, that we should gain a general idea of our ground on horseback, and afterwards that I should proceed alone on foot to sketch and examine details. C. K. lent me his Arab, (by name Gridiron,) he riding the iron-gray; and, having sent my luggage to Rieti, we started from Frascati, with our *valigie* strapped before our saddles, on as brilliant a morning as one could desire for the beginning of a long journey. We took our way along the vine-covered hills of Monte Porzio and Monte Compatri, and down to the melancholy Colonna, and so across the fresh bright Campagna to Gallicano, which is thought by some antiquaries to be the site of the ancient Pedum, though by others that city is supposed to have been situated at Zagarolo.[a] There is a most beautiful view of the modern town about a mile and a half before you reach it, rising on its long, narrow rock of tufa over the wide plain, and backed by the high mountain range of Guadagnolo, the loftiest in the neighbourhood of Rome. From this point the entrance is well seen to that remarkable cut by

[a] Cramer, An. Italy, vol. ii. 73.

which the ancient Via Prænestina was carried through the rocks which guard the valley of Gallicano, and at this picturesque passage we soon arrived. It is now known by the name of Cavamonte, and is about sixteen miles from Rome. Throughout its extent the old pavement of the Via Prænestina is quite perfect; and a solemn feeling of antiquity impresses you as you pass along it, shaded by walls of rock more than seventy feet in height, half covered with luxuriant foliage. The ancient road is here twenty-seven feet in breadth; its usual width being but fourteen.[a] A little chapel halfway through the pass adds to the beauty of the scene.



CAVAMONTE.

As to Gallicano, be it Pedum or not, it stands finely on its ridge, to which you look up as you pass from a quiet valley; but it has no point of general interest, though its neighbourhood abounds with studies for a landscape painter: here, a peep down those ravines so choked with vegetation, appreciated only by lovers of Campagna scenery, opening out to lines of yellow plain or blue

[a] Nibbi, Anal. i. 451.

hill; there, a narrow path, a shrine, some overhanging rocks with long tresses of creepers and wild fig, and a morsel of the town, completing the picture.

The Historical legends of Pedum are these: — that it was one of the Latin cities leagued to restore Tarquin; was allied with the Romans, and captured by Coriolanus; united itself with the Tiburtines, and was destroyed by L. Furius Camillus. Thenceforward Pedum is heard of no more. Nor is there any known record of Gallicano till A. D. 992, when (and until the thirteenth century) it belonged to the Conti: afterwards to the Colonna, through whom it passed to the Pallavicini.[a] Of the usual vicissitudes by siege and pillage, common to all the towns of the Roman Campagna during the middle ages, Gallicano was not without its share: at present it is little more than a village, and scarcely contains one thousand inhabitants.

Trotting away over the flat ground, or winding slowly down and up the steep sides of woody ravines, we skirted the grounds of Villa Catena, and were soon at Poli, placed at the foot of the mountain of Guadagnolo, whose sides we began to ascend, both as the shortest way of reaching Subiaco ere night, and because we wished to visit the picturesque Mentorella Chapel near its summit. But we had not started early enough to avoid the noon-day heat, which was rather severe as we toiled up the mule-path, leading our horses, which had yet a long day's work before them; and we rejoiced to arrive at the cool fountain two-thirds of the way up.

There is something exceedingly grand and *Poussinesque* in the rock of Guadagnolo, as seen from this shady fount; and yet, often as I have been there, I was always too hot or too tired to sketch it. What an ascent! The plains of Rome stretched out at our feet, and unfolding like a map at every step. At the crowning height, — the well-known square head of Guadagnolo, which is more than four thousand feet above the level of the sea, and is seen from every part of the Campagna,—one is rather surprised to find a compact little town or village (called also Guadagnolo, and containing between two and three hundred inhabitants,) oddly wedged as it were into the rocks which surround the whole place with a natural wall, and hide even the highest houses.[b] This strange little

[a] Nibbi, Anal. ii. 552.

[b] The town of Guadagnolo, according to Nibbi, "è situato sopra una delle cime del Monte Vulturella, o Mentorella, più alta di quella di Monte Gennaro, e per conseguenza è la punta più elevata di quelle che dominano immediatamente la campagna di Roma."—Nibbi, Anal. ii. 152.

Monte Gennaro is 4285 English feet in height.—Ibid. 106.

hive of dwellings, which is much more clean and comfortable than one would expect in so wild a spot, does not seem to have existed before the tenth century, when the breaking-up of many of the towns in the plain may have led to this high place of refuge being chosen by fugitives; and one more out of harm's way they certainly could not have fixed upon. The earliest records of it as a town date about 1137; and it has belonged, with Poli, to the Counts of Tusculum and Segni.[a] It was purchased by the father of the present Duke of Bracciano, who is also Duke of Poli and Guadagnolo. Though at so great an elevation, its little territory is very fertile in corn and pasture; and, before scaling the last outworks of this mountain fortress, we passed through many a smiling field and cheerful harvest-scene.

We were not sorry to reach the house inhabited by the *Ministro* or Steward of Torlonia, and his uncle, who rejoices in the name of Don Ermenengildo Salviati, and is Archpriest of the Mentorella Chapel. Here we reposed through the heat of the day; for the Casa Salviati is the palace of Guadagnolo, and the good-natured old clergyman piques himself not unreasonably on the neatness of his stables and garden. The roof of the house is level with the highest rocks on the mountain, forming a sort of terrace, whence at sun-rise the glory of the vast scene is beyond measure impressive.

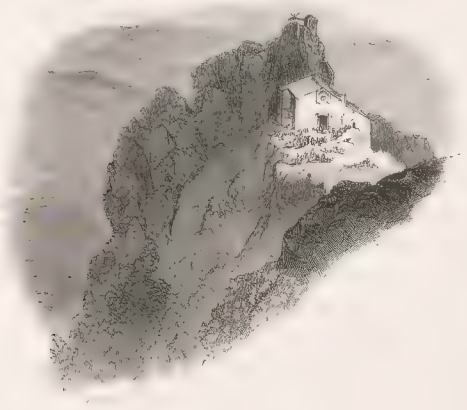
Having sufficiently rested and fed Gridiron, Iron-gray, and ourselves, we proceeded downward on our way to Subiaco; but, about a quarter of a mile below the town, the remarkable Hermitage and Church of La Mentorella caused us some delay. These are built on the edge of an isolated precipice, jutting out from the mountain side over the valley of Girano, and possess interest from their antiquity and the legends attached to them, as well as from the wild character of the scenery in which they are placed.

Here, in a cave at the foot of the rock, San Benedetto is believed to have lived in the sixth century, previous to his going to Subiaco; and a tradition of far earlier date (during the reign of the Emperor Trajan) represents the crag of La Mentorella as that where a vision of the deer with a crucifix between his horns led to the conversion of St. Eustace to Christianity. A flight of stairs outside the chapel, leads to the Campanile,

[a] Nibbi, Anal. ii. 152.

which is surmounted by a pair of antlers, commemorating the event; and these steps are diligently ascended by kneeling pilgrims on the fête-day of September 29.

It is certain that a church existed here as early as the year A. D. 594, since it was then bestowed by Gregory I. on the Abbot of Subiaco. In A. D. 958, the mountain of Guadagnolo, (then known by the names Wultvilla or Vulturella, whence Mentorella,[a]) together with its church, dedicated to Sta Maria, was possessed by the monastery of San Gregorio in Rome; but the building appears to have been abandoned after the fourteenth century, though it was restored by the Emperor Leopold I. in 1660.[b] The Gothic chapel now standing is of the tenth century.



LA MENTORELLA.

I have often been present at an annual *festa* held here on the 29th of September, and I remember at my first visit to have been particularly struck with all I saw. As I climbed the sides of Guadagnolo, on one of those cloudy afternoons of an Italian autumn before the rain clears the sky for a bright October, numerous parties of peasants were slowly following the winding track, chaunting litanies, or saying prayers in an under-tone. Many

[a] Nibbi, Anal. ii. 152.

[b] Ibid. ii. 329.

carried large stones from the summit to a spot not far below the town, where they were added to an enormous heap, the result of centuries of such annual visits. Lower down, on a platform of rock in front of the Mentorella Chapel, were gathered many hundred people (for a fair is held during all the night, and part of the day following); and the confusion of men, women, horses, asses, and goods of all kinds, was strikingly picturesque, seen, for it was now dark, by the broken light of many scattered fires. The Chapel itself on its solitary crag, backed by the high line of sombre mountains which divide the Roman from the Neapolitan dominions, and hang over the dim valley of Girano and Siciliano far below, was crowded with peasants, kneeling or sleeping under its dark arches · forming altogether so wild a scene, that, unable to tear myself away, I remained wandering from fire to fire, among the groups of people, nearly the whole night through.

From La Mentorella, there is a sort of path of steps cut in the rock, leading to the valley of Girano; a steep descent and narrow, choked by overgrowing brambles, and crossed by roots of chesnut trees, streams, &c. This we adopted by way of a short road to Subiaco, and were soon sufficiently embarrassed by losing the track, or by getting among high beech-woods, whence we saw nothing: our steeds, too, decidedly objected to being led down such ugly rocks and steep corners; so we drove them before us, which was scarcely a better plan, since they bothered us sadly, by striking into private short cuts of their own imagining, or by falling in their attempts to make quicker way. By reason of all such delays, it was late ere we reached the valley of Girano; fully owning the justice of Signor Nibbi's remark on the situation of Guadagnolo, "*incommoda oltremodo è la sua situazione.*"

Glad to be at the bottom of the mountain, we crossed the little plain, passed Girano, and wound through beautiful chesnut woods, till we reached the hills overlooking the valley below Civitella, just as heavy purple clouds shut out the last red line of sun-set. Thenceforth we journeyed on in utter darkness, over paths by no means pleasant, to Subiaco, where we slept.

July 27th, 1843. — We were off by sun-rise, down the long valley of the Anio; quitting it at the road to Arsoli, and following the Via Valeria, which anciently led from Tibur to the country of the Marsi: its traces are still visible here and there. Having passed Arsoli,[a] (the frontier town of the Roman States,) crowned by the palace of Prince Massimo, and having caught a glimpse of Riofreddo on our left, we were soon in the pretty plain of Cavaliere, than which, though not of great extent, there are few more pleasing; for it is so surrounded by towns perched on their hills, that, whichever way you turn, there is an interesting object,—Valinfreddo, Poggio-Cinolfo, Pereto, Collalto, Camerata, Oricoli, Rocca di Botte, &c. A cluster of houses is called Cavaliere; and the largest of these was formerly a *Locanda*, built by the Colonnesi, at the request of a cavalier of their family who lost his way, and passed a night on the plain, where there was then no house. Hence the name of the hamlet, and of the Pianura di Cavaliere[b], which abounds in game, and is greatly frequented by sportsmen. Here we entered the Neapolitan province of Abruzzo Secondo Ulteriore.

The word Abruzzo is derived by antiquaries from the Prætutii,[c] a people anciently inhabiting the northern part of the territory, which now forms the kingdom of Naples. Prætutia by the Lombards was changed into Aprutium, and with the Italians it became Abruzzo. At this day, "*la Teramana*" is a common name for one of these provinces, in which one hardly loses the sound of Interamna, the capital of the Prætutii, and site of the modern Teramo[d].

That portion of Italy now known as the three Abruzzi was anciently inhabited, by the Piceni, Prætutii, Vestini, Marrucini, Frentani, Peligni, Marsi, and Sabini; of which the two last only are remembered in the modern *Sabina* and *Marsica*, terms in common use, each of them the title of a bishopric, though the latter only is an Abruzzese diocese. All these territories under the Lombards became the counties of Amiterno, Balva or Valva, Forcone, Marsi, Penne, &c.[e]

After the establishment of the monarchy of Naples in the twelfth century by the Normans, the first recorded division of the whole kingdom was under

[a] Pope Adrian IV. (Breakspere), the only Englishman who ever wore the tiara, was wont to pass the villeggiatura at Arsoli. Corsig. Reg. Mar. i. 206. [b] Corsig. Reg. Mar. i. 223.
[c] Cramer, An. It. i. 289. [d] Ibid. i. 290. [e] Giustiniani, Diz. Disc. Prel.

Frederic II, by whom it was formed into nine provinces, governed each by a Giustiziere, an office created by King Roger I.[a]

These Giustizierati were—1. Abruzzo; 2. Terra di Lavoro; 3. Principato. 4. Basilicata; 5. Capitanata; 6. Terra di Bari; 7. Terra d'Otranto; 8. Val di Crati e Terra Giordana; 9. Calabria.

In A. D. 1273, the province of Abruzzo was further divided into Abruzzo Citeriore and Ulteriore, by King Charles I. of Anjou. The latter of these was again subdivided into Ulteriore Primo and Secondo by the Marchese di Carpio in A. D. 1684.[b]

The provinces of the three Abruzzi are bounded on the north and west by the States of the Church, on the east by the Adriatic, and on the south by the Neapolitan counties of Terra di Lavoro and Molise or Campobasso. Their united population stands thus in Del Re, whose description of the kingdom of Naples is one of the best published, so far as it is completed.

PROVINCES.	CAPITAL.	POPULATION.
Abruzzo Citeriore (or la Chietina)	Chieti	85,482[c]
Abruzzo 1° Ulteriore (or la Teramana)	Teramo	190,916[d]
Abruzzo 2do Ulteriore (or l'Aquilana)	Aquila	278,636[e]
Total		555,034

Each province is governed by an Intendente, and is divided into districts (*distretti*) which are governed by Sott' Intendenti, who reside at the *Capo Luogo* of their respective districts. The capital of each province is the seat of the Intendenza.

	DISTRICTS.
Abruzzo Citeriore	1. Chieti. 2. Lanciano. 3. Vasto.
Abruzzo 1° Ulteriore	1. Teramo. 2. Penne.
Abruzzo 2° Ulteriore	1. Aquila. 2. Solmona. 3. Avezzano. 4. Civita Ducale.

The distretti are further subdivided into *Circondarii*, under the control of Giudici; and these again into *Communes*.

[a] Giustiniani, Diz. Disc. Prel. [b] Ibid.
[c] Del Re, ii. 329. [d] Ibid. ii. 23. [e] Ibid. ii. 115.

By far the greater portion of the territory of the three Abruzzi is of a mountainous character, some of the highest points of the Apennines being situated in these provinces: Monte Corno (usually called *Il Gran Sasso d'Italia*), Terminillo, and Velino, in the Abruzzo Ult. 2do; and the Maiella in Abruzzo Citeriore. Of these, Monte Corno is 9577 Paris feet above the level of the sea;[a] Terminillo, 6597;[b] Velino, about 7000; La Maiella, 8000.[c]

The provinces of Chieti and Teramo are less interesting to a landscape painter than that of Aquila, the scenery of which, though somewhat bleak, is wild and majestic to a great degree: its towns also have more attractions both in a picturesque and historical point of view, and I confess my prejudices are equally in favour of its inhabitants. Most of the country between the Apennines and the Adriatic is highly cultivated, abounding with the vine, olive, &c.: that in the higher ground of the Abruzzi 1° and 2do Ult. is chiefly pasture land. To the south and east of the provinces, a large tract, bounded by the Terra di Lavoro and the Papal States, is thickly wooded; but extreme bareness is the characteristic of the greater extent of the Abruzzese territory.

The flocks of the Abruzzo Ulteriore 2do, according to Del Re, amount to seven hundred thousand head in number, most part of which migrate annually to Apulia at the end of September, by the three principal *tratturi* or sheepwalks commencing in the neighbourhood of Aquila, Celano, and Pescaseroli; and return by the same route after the shearing in May. Part go to the Roman Campagna in October, by the route of Rieti or Arsoli: these are chiefly from the districts of Civita Ducale and Aquila. Some remain in their native plains. All feed in the province during summer, in the valleys of Rocca di Mezzo, the environs of the Gran Sasso, the Cicolano, the plains of Lionessa, or Cinque Miglia, &c.[d] Of the annual march of Abruzzo sheep and shepherds so excellent and graphic an account has already appeared in the Hon. K. Craven's Excursions in the Northern Provinces of Naples, that any further description would be unnecessary; yet I cannot help saying that the impression I receive from these extraordinary caravans is quite other than gloom or melancholy.

To me the whole picture is one of pastoral and cheerful industry, and the life of the Abruzzese Pecoraro is the *beau ideal* of a shepherd's existence. On

[a] Del Re, ii. 143.
[b] Guattani, i. 89.
[c] Keppel Craven, ii. chap. ix.
[d] Del Re, ii. 255.

his native mountains his amusement is playing on the bagpipes or samboni, whose long-drawn notes you may hear hour after hour in the summer days, an accompaniment of indescribable romance to those poetical scenes. In the plains of the Campagna you will observe him knitting stockings, or reading some book of a devotional character. Altogether a more inoffensive and contented race of beings I never met with, though they certainly are more sedate in their deportment than the noisy denizens of Naples.

One or two more general remarks regarding the provinces of the Abruzzi may be allowed. The great valleys in the heart of the Apennines are subject to the scourge of earthquakes, and that most frequently and fatally. And the inhabitants, for courtesy, simplicity, and hospitality, are a proverb among Italians as well as strangers.

A short boundary question ensued on reaching the Neapolitan frontier at Cavaliere, where, however, we were scarcely detained by some very civil officials, so on we cantered, fording a stream below Poggio Cinolfo, and soon arriving at Carsōli, hidden from the plain in a little nook of its own. A ruined bridge below, and a shattered castle above, give a more picturesque than comfortable air to the modern town, which contains eight or nine thousand inhabitants,[a] and is successor to, though not on the same site as, the ancient Carseoli:[b] within, dirty narrow streets, only redeemed here and there by a bit of Gothic door or window, raise no favourable idea of the present condition of this once respectable abode of the Equi, where they sacrificed foxes to Ceres, and where the Romans imprisoned Bituitus, king of Thrace.[c]

It was nearly noon: so we put up our horses, and having satisfied the authorities as to our passports and *permessi*[d] for our steeds, we adjourned to a wretched *Locanda*, where the Oste flattered us with hopes of something to eat, bidding us wait in a closet, very nearly filled up by a large bed, a cracked spinette, and an inclined table with uncertain legs: but when the repast was brought, both eatables and drinkables were such that, though pretty well used to uncommon food, we were compelled to be content with bread and water: and, leaving our dinner in the charming chamber, where "cold and unho-

[a] Giustiniani, Diz. [b] Cramer, An. It. i. 323. [c] Corsig. Reg. Mar.

[d] A permission is necessary from the Neapolitan minister resident in Rome for introducing horses from the Papal states into the Neapolitan dominions.

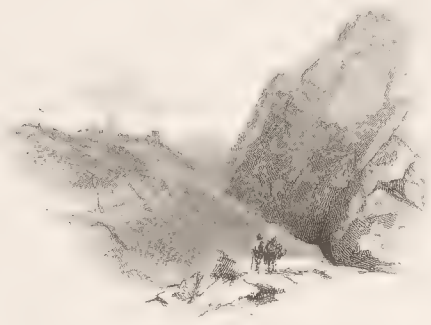
noured, its relics were laid," we strolled by the willow-edged Turano, a stream which rises near Carsōli, till our horses were ready to start. This was the first place where we encountered that horrible beverage, called *Vino Cotto*, which is wine boiled when new to make it keep; and, spite of its nastiness, is drunk all over the Abruzzi by the common people. I have tasted some, kept for many years, that was little inferior to good Marsala, but when new, it is filthy beyond imagination.

About two, we set off again, by a pathway through a rising valley. Beyond Carsōli, there is no road for carriages into the Abruzzi: bare rocks were on our left, and on our right high hills, covered, as far as eye could reach, with forests of oak, looking black and untrodden enough to shelter a world of bears and wolves. Patience, and endurance of heat, bore us to Colli, an uninteresting village, which offered us nothing to remark beyond the courtesy and simple good-breeding of its peasant inhabitants.

Beyond this, we toiled onward through this long stony pass, and all our hopes were fixed on Rocca di Cerri, a village at the top of the hill; on arriving at which, we confessed to being well repaid for our labour, by the view over the sublime Marsica. On our left, the snowy peaks of Velino, more than seven thousand feet in height, were gloomy beneath threatening clouds, and a wild confusion of misty mountains closed that side of the scene. Far below, in bright sun-shine, lay a long streak of the blue Lake of Fucino, with its beautiful plain, dotted and spangled with woods and villages; and beyond the Lake uprose the strangely-formed mountain of Celano, with many a high range of faint, blue hills, while the dark-castled rocks and formidable pass of Tagliacozzo were at our feet. Having admired all this, we descended by a steep serpentine path, and were soon at the level of the Castle of Tagliacozzo, which guards the entrance to the plain below.

I have never seen anything more majestic than the approach to Tagliacozzo. It is a precipitous ravine, almost artificial in appearance; and, by some, indeed, considered as having been partly formed by the Romans, for the transit of the Via Valeria. A monastery, with a *Calvario*, or range of shrines, stands at the entrance of this extraordinary gorge, the portals of which are, on one hand, huge crags, crested with a ruined castle; on the

other, perpendicular precipices: between them is placed the town, receding step by step to the plain below, while the picture is completed by the



ANCIENT ACCESS TO TAGLIACCZZO.

three peaks of the towering Monte Velino, entirely filling up the opening of the ravine. (See PLATE I.)

Long time we remained enjoying this sublime scene, and debating whether we should go on to Avezzano for the night, or remain at Tagliacozzo, as we had a letter of recommendation to its greatest proprietor, Don Filippo Mastroddi. We resolved finally to proceed; partly, because on presenting ourselves to the family, we might have been induced to stay a longer time than we could well afford for our equestrian ramble, in which we had determined to see as much as possible in a short period; and partly, because we were not so well provided with dress as a visit to so grandiose a Palazzo as the Casa Mastroddi might render desirable. So down we went, by a street strongly resembling a stair-case, to the plain below, from whence the town has a most singular appearance, the Palazzo Mastroddi occupying a fine situation on the green near the Piazza. (See PLATE II.)

The lines of Dante,—

" e la di Tagliacozzo,[a]
Ove senz' armi vinse il vecchio Alardi,"

[a] Dante, Inferno, canto 28, l. 17.



E. Lear del. et lith.

AGLI[illegible]


E. Lear del et lith

have rendered the name of this town familiar to the reader of Italian poetry:[a] not that the battle between Corradino and Charles was fought within a considerable distance; and one wonders, why the celebrated though decayed city of Alba, or the modern Avezzano, near which the engagement really took place, did not rather connect their names with so great an historical event. Tagliacozzo was then, perhaps, the more important place. At present, the town contains upwards of three thousand inhabitants, and is the most thriving in all the Marsica.

There is no record of Taliacozzo having been the site of any ancient city; though Taliaquitium, Taleacotium, have called forth a great deal of ingenuity from various antiquarian etymologists. It seems to have been a stronghold of importance, and its possession was often contested during the divisions of the middle ages, as commanding a passage between the Papal and Neapolitan dominions: the Counts, or Dukes of Tagliacozzo, were consequently, powerful Barons. In 1442 A.D., it was bestowed on the Orsini by King Alfonso: and, in 1497, Fabrizio Colonna received it from King Ferrante; and the Colonnesi still hold much of the territory round the town.[b] Tagliacozzo is much resorted to by the devout, from its containing the remains of the Bishop Tommaso di Celano,[c] whose bones rest in the church of St. Francesco. The Madonna, called dell' Oriente, (but from what cause even the labours of the Bishop of Venosa give no information,) is also an object of great veneration.

[a] See also Hudibras,

"So learned Taliacotius," &c.

Part I. Canto i. l. 281.

Corsignani mentions this strange surgical operator as Gasparo di Tagliacozzo—

"*Uomo famoso per sanare i nasi recisi da' visaggi,*"

Corsig. Reg. Mar. ii. 481,

and in his volume of the remarkable characters of the Marsica,—

"Admirabilis sanè videtur Gaspar Taleacotii, qui ascitios nasus restituere valebat. Quum igitur alicui cælatus erat nasus, quibusdam adhibitis secretis, ac signato usque ad sanguinis effusionem brachio, cum quo per quadraginta dies, haud discretus sistere debebat, invalescebat. Homo quidem, hac in arte singularis, excellensque fuit, juxta Michaelem Etmuler. tom. i. Institut. Medicar. Terapeusis, folio mihi 326, circa Med. Class. iv. Sect. 11, ubi casum cuidam Gallo eventum, et a prædicto Gaspare sanato, refert; Philosophus et Medicus præclarissimus micans, tunc temporis libros duos edidit de Curtorum videlicet Chirurgia per insitionem, Venetiis, apud Robertum Majettum M.D.XCVII. in fol. in quibus ea omnia, quæ ad Chirurgiæ, narium, aurium, ac labiorum, per insitionem restaurandorum tum theoricen, tum practicen pertinent tractantur."—Cors. de Vir. Ill. p. 242.

[b] Giustin. Diz. [c] Cor. Reg. Mar. i. 285.

The road nearly as far as Scurcola was dull, but below that town the views are infinitely lovely, and every moment gave us increased pleasure, as we passed through scenes so long known to us by books only, and which we had so often desired to see. As the afternoon grew cooler, and our freshened horses gallopped gaily over the turf, bordering the road to Avezzano, every step was over ground notorious for interest of antiquity, or of more modern history, and every change of the prospect had some new charm: the line of Monte Velino sweeping down to the plain, and Magliano, Capelle, or other villages, glittering from a wide space of yellow corn. There was most ancient Alba on its twin hills; the prison of Siphax, Perseus, and other captive kings, in the days of Roman conquests: there the mountains beyond the Liris, and the high Serra di Sant' Antonio, and the dark forests of the Equi. There were the Campi Valentini, the golden plains, where Corradino and Charles of Anjou threw the deciding die for the Crown of Naples. That little heap of gray ruin is all now remaining of the splendid Cistercian monastery, founded by the victor: and, at the highest point of the town of Scurcola, is the spire of the church, yet containing the image of the Madonna, found below the ruins of the convent.

An indescribable quiet, a feeling of distance from the busy world, pervades this sequestered district. No road connects the Marsica, (or district where the ancient Marsi resided,) with either Rome or Naples. The old Via Valeria passed through it from Rome, and its vestiges are still visible near the Castle of Tagliacozzo; but now the only roads for carriages in the whole territory are from Tagliacozzo to Avezzano, Celano, and Magliano: and one from Capistrello to Sora, not yet completed. Shut up in its own circle of high mountains, the Marsica has no communication (beyond that afforded by mule-tracks) with any great city; and it possesses, besides the delight of its unfrequented tranquillity, more attractions among its inhabitants, its scenery, and antiquities, than any place it has been ever my fortune to visit.

Passing on through the village of Capelle, and leaving Alba on our left, to be visited in my second journey, we were soon in sight of Avezzano, standing in the low ground near the Lake of Fucino, which lay behind it, a narrow blue line, bounded by beautiful mountains, purple in the light of



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AVEZZANO.

evening. The wish to explore its rocky sides and glittering towns was strong within us as we advanced towards Avezzano, hoping much for our morrow. (See PLATE III.)

All was bustle of harvest; treading out of corn, and bearing away of sheaves on the common before the gate of Avezzano, whose fine castle, built by the Colonna in the fifteenth century, stands well at the entrance of the town,



CASTLE OF AVEZZANO.

and is a good specimen of a baronial residence. We asked for some inn or *Locanda*, but these are desiderata in Abruzzo; and unluckily we had to seek our night's quarters in a place to which we had not brought a letter of introduction. One house, a casa Corradini, was indicated as likely to receive us, and so we entered the town in search of it.

Though a Capo di Distretto, Avezzano is not a promising town in appearance; there are some few good palaces and convents, but the general effect of its streets is mean and uninteresting. It is not, I believe, the successor of any ancient city, yet Corsignani and others seek to derive its name

from a temple of Janus—Ara Jani. Be this as it may, the decay of such important places of antiquity as Alba, Marrubium, Angizia, &c., may well have given rise to the more modern towns in their neighbourhood. Avezzāno was probably no inconsiderable town in the middle ages, since we read of it as the temporary abode of the emperor Frederic, in 1242.[a] Of the people here, as of all we had met since our entering the Abruzzi, the prevailing character was politeness and goodnature. The town contains about two thousand five hundred inhabitants.[b]

We sate sometime on our horses, waiting for the Padrone of our lodgings, that were to be, and meanwhile, were highly amused by one of those torrents of pigs, common to Italian country towns, when the sable tribe, for black they are all, return at night to supper. Most of these towns being upon hills, the swine are obliged to go *up*, and therefore arrive in a state of placid expectation; but at Avezzano, they all have to come *down* hill, and so rush into the piazza in an uncontrollable frenzy. How we did laugh, to the diversion of half the rabble of the town, who had come to gaze on us, as the immense current of grunters burst from the long street into the market-place, with a wonderful hubbub, and ran shrieking away through all the lanes of the place.

When the pig-storm was over, and we had seen to our steeds, we made the most of the short remaining light and hurried to our lodgings, where three ineffably polite females shewed us into a large, raftered room, of a bewildering aspect, with much furniture, and a great assortment of old clothes, and strewed with articles of female dress, intermixed rather oddly with fowls of all sizes, fluttering about in every direction, over and under two very misshapen beds. All this, added to the walls having a speckly appearance, which to the initiated, denotes the presence of certain flat entomological visitors, did not promise much repose; nor did the pensive chirping of an afflicted, one-winged chicken, upon whom one of our landladies lavished the most touching caresses, at all strengthen our admiration of the dormitory we had selected.

Meantime, while one of our hostesses reduced our chamber to order, we assisted the other two, (one of whom was very handsome, but alarmingly

[a] Antinori, Mem. &c. vol. ii. p. 105.

[b] Giustiniani.

fierce,) to pluck and roast some pigeons, which eventually produced us no bad supper:—for wine, alas! the horrible *vino cotto* was a most unsatisfactory substitute. As for our horses, fortunately for them, they were far better lodged than their masters.

Still there was daylight left for a stroll; so we set off on foot to the Lake, (hardly a mile distant,) through the quietest green lanes of turf, bordered by poplars, and enclosing plantations of low vines. How fresh the air! How deliciously calm the shallow, transparent waters! How grateful the placid beauty of that lovely prospect, after all the heat of the day! Numbers of horses and flocks of sheep were scattered over the low meadows, near the water's edge: herds of goats were slowly and sedately winding their homeward way. It was not easy to quit the enjoyment of so tranquil a scene; and we wandered till it was dark, by the still mirror,—an enjoyment ill exchanged for a return to our strange abode, to which, notwithstanding, the pigeons, boiled and roast, together with some good macaroni, partly reconciled us.

There was no lock to our door. All night long, two or three frantic hens kept tearing round the room, and would by no means be expelled: the afflicted chicken with a broken wing scrambled about the floor without intermission: vermin of two species, (politely called B flats and F sharps,) worried us beyond endurance: a perpetual chorus of pigeons thrilled over our heads, and an accompaniment of pigs resounded from below. So we were very glad when morning appeared.

Thus ended our first day and night in the Abruzzi.

July 28, 1843. By sunrise we had taken our coffee and bread, and were on our horses; our day's programme being to see the Emissario, and then to coast the Lake, halting where choice or accident might determine, making a short day for the sake of Irongray and Gridiron.

The Lago di Fucino, (Lacus Fucinus of the ancients,) which is sixty-two or sixty-three miles from Rome, and ten from Tagliacozzo,[a] is about thirty-five miles in circumference, and is situated at a height of two thousand Parisian feet above the level of the sea.[b] During the middle ages, it was

[a] Ant. i. 370. [b] Del Re, ii. 211.

more frequently called Lago di Celano, from its vicinity to that town, then the principal in the Marsica. The ancient cities, once flourishing on its borders, have either utterly disappeared, or have left scanty traces whereby to determine their position; and, at the present day, the most interesting antiquity the immediate vicinity can boast of is the great Emissario, a passage or tunnel, about nineteen feet in height, nine broad, and nearly three miles in length, constructed by the Emperor Claudius,[a] for the purpose of carrying off the waters of the Lake (which frequently inundated the surrounding country) into the river Liris.[b] It is needless to repeat the particulars of the great naval exhibition of a combat on the Lake, between nineteen thousand gladiators, given by the Emperor at the opening of the Emissario, (to complete which, thirty thousand slaves had laboured for eleven years,) since the accounts given by Roman historians and modern antiquaries are sufficiently explicit.[c]

After the time of Claudius, this great work was repaired by Hadrian and Trajan; but with the fall of the Roman Empire it gradually decayed, and the neglect occasioned by the successive incursions of barbarians went far to destroy this magnificent monument of antiquity. In A.D. 1240 the Emperor Frederic II. ordered the Emissario to be re-opened, and the work was greatly advanced, when his death put a stop to its progress. King Alfonso is supposed to have contemplated its recommencement; but the disturbances of his reign, or the change of viceroys, prevented its execution. Towards the middle of the 16th century, the Colonna, who possessed most of the surrounding territory, also commenced the work of restoration, but desisted from want of funds. In 1786, King Ferdinand attempted to repair the Emissario; but the wars of Europe, at the end of the last century, were the cause of the failure of his design.[d] In 1826 the work of repair was again resumed, and in 1831 was much advanced;[e] but since that time decay has pursued her work of destruction unopposed. Thus, through the long course of eighteen centuries, the object so long desired has never been attained, nor does it seem very likely to be.

[a] "Non meno colla speranza della gloria che con quella dell' utile." Ant. i. 371.
[b] Guatt. iii. 50. [c] Sir R. C. Hoare's Classical Tour, vol. i. p. 352, &c. Cramer, Anc. It. p. 328.
[d] Afan di Rivera, 67–70. [e] K. Craven, vol. i. chap. iv.

No satisfactory cause appears to have been yet assigned for the great increase of the Lake during some periods. Among the common people, it is said[a] to be a popular belief, that the waters rise and decrease every seven years. The works of Antinori and Afan di Rivera contain much information on the subject, as well as minute details relative to the construction of the Emissario.

In 1752, it is recorded, that the Lake of Fucino was so low, that the foundations of the ancient Marruvium were seen, and several statues of Claudius and Agrippina were discovered and sent to Caserta. In 1783 the Lake began to increase, and rose fifteen palmi[b] before the year 1787, when it sunk to nearly its former level. From 1806 to 1816, the most formidable inundation on record took place: the superficies of the Lake was twenty palmi higher than at the greatest increase of 1780–7. The peninsula of Ortucchio became an island; the water rose above the altar of the church; and great destruction of property took place there, as well as at Trasacco and Luco. Avezzano itself remained but twenty-seven palmi above the Lake: and the year 1816 will always be remembered as one of terror and distress to the inhabitants of the district. From that time the Lake went down forty-seven palmi in the space of nineteen years; so that land, which was under water in the years 1670, 1740, and 1780, stood thirteen palmi above it in 1835.[c] At present, the Lake is again on the increase, though very slowly.

The Lake of Fucino is not often frozen over; and the only recorded years of its being so are 1167, 1226, 1595, 1683, and 1726.[d] During the winter it is the resort of innumerable wild-fowl, when its grand circle of mountains is entirely covered with snow, which indeed remains till late in the summer. Tench of large size, bream, and barbel, are the principal production of its waters.[e]

By the pleasant lanes we traversed last evening, we arrived at the Lake, but soon changed our road for a wofully stony one, under the moun-

[a] Antinori, i. 366. [b] A Palmo is 8¾ inches. [c] Afan di Rivera, p. 10.

[d] Guattani, iii. 52; and Del Re, ii. 211.

[e] The lake and territory were at one time the property of the Dukes of Spoleto, and were given to the Benedictines of M. Casino by Ildebrand Duke of Spoleto in 774. Ant. i. 370.

tain on its south side; this soon brought us to the celebrated Emissario, the position of which vast work is easily traced at a distance by mounds of earth at intervals, between the hill through which it is carried, and the Lake. There is no very great degree of the picturesque in its crumbling walls of red brick-work; but the view from the hill-side, above the higher part of this gigantic witness of Roman grandeur, fully atones for the want of outward magnificence in its ruins. Here my companion left me, to explore and measure the Emissario; while I, unapt to make researches in the bowels of the damp earth, greatly preferred reclining in the bright sunshine, untired with the solemn prospect below me.

The plain of Avezzano; the clear blue lake; Alba; and Velino, with its fine peaks, alternately in bright light, or shaded by passing clouds; the far snow-covered mountains beyond Solmona; the bare pass of Forca Carusa; the precipitous crag of Celano,—all these at once, brilliant with the splendour of Italian morning, formed a scene not to be slightly gazed at, or lightly forgotten — the utter quiet of all around! the character of undisturbed beauty which threw a spell of enchantment over the whole!

A herd of white goats blinking and sneezing lazily in the early sun; their goatherd piping on a little reed; two or three large falcons soaring above the Lake; the watchful cormorant sitting motionless on its shining surface; and a host of merry flies sporting in the fragrant air,—these were the only signs of life in the very spot where the thrones of Claudius and his Empress were placed on the crowd-blackened hill: a few distant fishing-boats dotted the Lake where, eighteen centuries ago, the cries of combat rent the air, and the glitter of contending galleys delighted the Roman multitude. (See PLATE IV.)

The solitary character of the place is most striking; no link between the gay populous past, and the lonely present; no work of any intermediate century breaks its desolate and poetical feeling. I could willingly have lingered there for hours, for I can recall no scene at once so impressive and beautiful.

When K. had finished his subterranean expedition, we mounted our horses and went slowly on; the hills advancing to the Lake, and forming a high continuous wall on our right. Soon we reached Luco; first pausing at the Church of S. Maria di Luco, which stands on the site of the ancient Angizia,[a]

[a] Sir R. C. Hoare's Classical Tour, vol. i. p. 370. Cramer, vol. i. p. 330. Classical Museum, No. 5, p. 175.


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a fact placed beyond doubt by inscriptions found in the vicinity of the walls, which, though now mostly beneath the surface of the Lake, can be traced in their full extent. D. Fran. Ferrante is said by Guattani to have measured them, and their circumference is stated to be one mile and a third.[a]

The Church of Santa Maria, built on part of these ancient walls, is also of great antiquity; having been given to the Benedictines by Doda, Contessa de' Marsi, A. D. 930.[b] The *Lucus*, or Grove of Ancizia or Angitiæ, from which the modern town derives its name, I looked for in vain, although Giustiniani says it is "*oggi chiamato Agnano;*" but we were well pleased with the beautiful view of the Lake, and the group of Alba and Velino, now diminished by distance, and yet forming a fine back-ground to the picturesque church and walls. (See PLATE V.)

The present town of Luco contains about sixteen hundred inhabitants,[c] nearly the whole of whom are supported by fishing in the Lake; the result of which they carry by Capistrello and Canistro to Subiaco, and even to Rome. The tench and barbel of Fucino are considered good; there are *Scardafe* also, and *Lasche*, and queer little ugly crabs, and crawfish, and frogs: on the whole, in my opinion, a very nasty collection; the Argentina being the only fish I could ever eat without fear of choking. We passed through Luco, a lively little town, but with no particular object worthy of remark. Its inhabitants are considered by the Marsicans generally as being the finest race among them, strong and healthy, though not handsome; indeed, neither the Abruzzo men nor women can be considered as entitled to the reputation of great beauty, compared with that found in other parts of Italy.

We remarked at every step the courtesy and pleasing cordiality of the peasants, nearly every individual saluting us, both while passing through the town, and afterwards from the vineyards by the roadside: most of them added a benediction, "*V'accompagna Maria!*" or "*Vi benedica Gesù!*" or "*Faccia felice*

[a] Guattani, iii. 61. The same author gives the following inscription as one discovered by D. F. Ferrante:—

SEX PACCIUS
ET SEX PACCIUS . IA
QUINQ. MURUM . VET
CONSUMPTUM . A . SOLO . RES.
EX. P. P. ANGITLÆ.

[b] Corsig. Reg. Mar. i. 411.

[c] Giustiniani.

viaggio!" at the least. This good-breeding and hospitable feeling throughout the Marsic territory are truly charming.

Keeping close to the Lake, through low vineyards, and fields gay with golden grain, and merry with the bustle of harvest, we left the valley of Collelungo on our right, and shortly reached Trasacco, the limit we had fixed to our day's sight-seeing. Indeed, beyond this town there is no further passage, perpendicular rocks washed by the Lake barring all further progress; though I have been told that about eight years ago the waters were low enough to admit of a pedestrian reaching Ortucchio.

Trasacco,[a] the Transaqua of old records, now a small town of seven hundred and fifty inhabitants,[b] seems to have no claim to antiquity of origin, beyond its having been built on the site of a palace of Claudius, afterwards inhabited by Trajan. On the ruins of this palace San Rufino is said to have erected the church which now bears his name: he was the first Bishop of the Marsi, about A. D. 237, and suffered martyrdom under the Emperor Maximinian,[c] together with San Cesidio, whose relics are great objects of veneration to the Marsi of the present day. Whatever may have been the former state of Trasacco, its present condition is sufficiently forlorn; though its church, and several bits of Gothic architecture about the town, are well worth some attention, which I regret I did not give to them.

On asking for a *Locanda*, we were directed to the first family of the town, the De' Gasparis, who had resided there for several centuries; to whose house we went, and asked boldly for aid for ourselves and horses. This was cheerfully given, though we were strangers, and without any letter of recommendation: Don Serafino—(everybody is called Don throughout the Neapolitan states, a remnant of old Spanish customs,)—doing the honours of his establishment, a small but decent dwelling, with great friendliness.

After a dull and hungry hour of converse with some younger sons of our host, mostly on the subjects of hunting, &c., we were taken, with many apologies for its being fast-day, into another room, where a repast was already on the table. The father De' Gasparis did not appear, but his six sons supplied his place; and, to say truth, the hospitality of this worthy family was rather

[a] Sir R. C. Hoare's Classical Tour, i. 374. Mezzadri, Mem. [b] Giustiniani.
[c] Mezzadri, Mem. p. 19.



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oppressive, for there was no end of dinner, and the way in which they continually loaded our plates seriously threatened apoplexy. The macaroni, a word used in the Abruzzi to express long slices of paste, (usually in summer dressed with *Pomi d'oro* or Tomatas,) was what we could least fight off; and, since Benjamin's days, nothing was ever seen like the supplies we groaned under. "*Bisogna mangiare!*" "*è un piatto nazionale!*" exclaimed the six brothers if we paused in the work set before us. "*Non possiamo più!*" said we. "*Mangiate! mangiate! sempre mangiate!*" said they.

Fruit and excellent coffee having closed our refreshment, and rather relieved us from the terror we felt at the continual exhortation "*mangiare*," K. and I, spite of our friends' earnest entreaties not to brave the sun, wandered forth to explore the land. It was indeed too hot for any exertion, and we got little for our pains, sheer rock and deep water soon ending our research; and all we could do was to gaze at the grey Lake, for many a cloud was rising westward, as we stood at the end of a fearfully hot slip of white pebbles, bordered by a fringe of meditative green frogs, which went pop into the classic wave on the approach of our disturbing footsteps.

On our return to the town, Don Serafino, who is arch-priest of the Church of S. Cesidio, lionized us all over it, and shewed us some of the Gothic windows, &c. I have alluded to above. But what most pleased me at Trasacco was a view near a curious but picturesque old tower, square at its base, and round at top, over-looking all the wide Lake, with the distant Velino beyond. Oderisius, Count of the Marsi, is said to have resided in "*la torre anticha di Trasacco*" in the year 1050; but whether this were the building, I know not.[a] (See PLATE VI.)

Our horses were brought forth, though we were much pressed to remain until to-morrow: this, however, could not be. So, wishing a hearty farewell to our friendly hosts, and promising to revisit them if possible, we set off towards Avezzano with a very pleasant store of feelings called forth by such unaffected courtesy.

It was waxing late, and fast the clouds were gathering. Back we galloped, by the low vineyards, and past the fish-getting and harvest-collecting Luco; but in vain. The storm spread dark and wide over mountain and water,

[a] Mezzadri, Mem. p. 104.—Porzia Febonia, mother of Cardinal Baronius, was born in Trasacco. Ib.

and burst fearfully on us as we reached the Emissario; whence, in drenching torrents, we went at full speed down the long green lanes, the scenery but half visible through a driving mist of hail and rain. Pretty well soaked we were as we entered Avezzano, driving before us an immense troop of unhappy donkeys, who had lost all command of their intellects at our first rapid approach, and rushed wildly before us all the way home.

We found our landladies in a state of distress at the death of the beforementioned invalid chicken, who had committed suicide in a tub of water. This did not, however, disturb our peace so much as the summons of an inspector of police to his office, on the ground of our passports not being in order: but, as we considered them to be quite right, (setting aside the fact of our being wet through, and that our supper was waiting,) we politely requested him to come to us instead; which eventually he did, and signed our passports on looking at some of our introductory letters. A distinct "*Carta di Passo*" is, however, requisite for every separate province of the kingdom of Naples for those who travel out of the high-road, — a circumstance they had not informed us of at Carsōli; and, although we were not to blame for our involuntary ignorance, the inspector was no less in the right.

After these events we retired to bed, and were charmed for another night by the sportive proceedings of fowls, fleas, bugs, pigeons, and pigs, as before.

July 29, 1843. A lovely morning followed the tempestuous night; and as we trotted at sunrise along the road from Avezzano to Celano,—bound to no particular place, but at the mercy of the weather and our own caprices,—everything seemed fresh and delightful. Groups of peasants journeying to the market of Avezzano enlivened the way, each giving us a passing greeting. Below us on the right were fields of uninterrupted cultivation—vines and Indian corn, stretching to the Lake: to the left the yellow plain of Alba, with its town always in sight, until shut out by the hill of Paterno, on whose sides, the sunniest and most fertile in all the Marsica, the olive, an unusual guest in these parts, grows abundantly. Looking back, Serra di Sant' Antonio, the loftiest of the range of mountains guarding the valley of the Liris, towers over all the scene.



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APPROACH TO CELANO.

We approached Celano by stony lanes bordered with poplars, and more like watercourses than roads; for the carriage-road ceases below Paterno. Here all the scenery grows more wild and Swiss in character: vistas between mountains displayed crags with towns perched thereon; and clouds, covering many of the higher points, lent a mystery to what was beyond.

Celano,[a] once an important fortress-town, and the head of the Marsica during the troublous times of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, is now remarkable only for the extreme picturesqueness of its situation: it stands below a wondrous bare precipice on a hill overlooking the whole of the Lake of Fucino, though at a considerable distance from its edge; the space between the town and the water being filled with meadows and vineyards, and watered by the clearest streams. (See PLATE VII.)

The history of Celano possesses a great deal of interest; and the life of one of its Countesses, Covella, would alone furnish romance enough for a volume. Its situation is said to be near that of Cliternum, but on what authority I know not. A Count Tomaso of Celano appears to have been a turbulent subject of the Emperor Frederic II., who, in 1223, took and destroyed the town,[b] exiling its inhabitants to Calabria, Sicily, and Malta; whence they returned, and rebuilt their dwellings in the following reign. There is a poetical tradition of a palace in the old town, containing a marble staircase famous for curing anybody who was in love, by the simple remedy of walking up to the top of it; an easier method of purchasing peace of mind than the leap from the Lesbian promontory!

The Castle of Celano, a splendid fortress, and till recently in good preservation, was built about 1450,[c] by one of the three husbands of the Countess Covella; but whether Lionello Acclozamuro, or Giacomo Caldora, or Edward

[a] Celano contains 3000 inhabitants. Giustin.

[b] Cor. Reg. Mar. i. 467.

[c] Cor. Reg. Mar. i. 473.

Colonna, it is not easy to state, as historians disagree as to the order in which the lady's husbands succeeded each other.[a] But as, in 1430, a son of Lorenzo Colonna, Count of Alba and Celano, was made Duke of Amalfi by Queen Giovanna II.,[b] it is most probable the castle is of Colonna origin. Celano subsequently passed into the hands of the Orsini, who enjoyed it with Amalfi until their possessions were bestowed, in 1461, by Ferdinand I. on the Piccolomini,[c] who retained both until 1584, when Giovanni Piccolomini, the last Duke of Amalfi, sold it.[d] How the Peretti obtained Celano, I do not know; nor who ruled it after the disturbances of Massaniello in 1647, when the town rebelled and was severely punished.[e] The last owner of this beautiful place died a few years since intestate; and the property is now in a decaying state, while numerous heirs-at-law are contesting its possession.

The Sequenza, or Requiem, used at the burial of the dead in the Roman Catholic Church, and known by its first words "Dies Iræ, dies illa," is said to have been composed by the Beato Tomaso of Celano, who died A. D. 1253.[f]

The Dies Iræ has been attributed to S. Buonaventura, to Card. Fr. Matteo di Acquasparte, to Agostino Biella (as late as 1491), to S. Bernard, and to Gregory the Great; so that there seems little certainty on the subject.

Others name Card. Latino Frangipane Malebranca Orsini as the author, but state that it was first sung publicly by Tomaso of Celano. Febbonius, quoted by Corsignani, says that the original sketch or skeleton of the Dies Iræ was found in a box of Tomaso di Celano.[g] Finally, P. Bartolomeo Pisano says,

"Locum de Cœlano, de quo fuit Thomas qui mandato Apostolos scripsit sermone polito Legendam primam Beati Francisci, et prosam de Mortuis, quæ cantatur in Missa, scilicet 'Dies Iræ, dies illa.'"[h]

We gained the summit of the hill on which the town is placed, and held a council as to our further proceedings as soon as we reached the market-place or Piazza of Celano, where, itself a picture, we lingered to admire the view. We decided on going on to Solmona; and, having voted the rock above

[a] Summonte, Hist. Nap. iii. 401. Cors.
[b] Camera Amalfi, 189.
[c] Cam. Amal. 190.
[d] Cam. Amal. 199.
[e] Cors. i. 493.
[f] His bones were removed to Tagliacozzo in 1530.
[g] Cor. Reg. Mar. ii. 173.
[h] P. Bar. Pisano Confor. S. Francis, ii. 110.



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CELANO



PIAZZA DI CELANO

Celano a most suspicious and comfortless neighbour, we went down on the opposite side of the hill, and, regaining the level of the Lake, bent our way towards the Forca Carusa. How infinitely grand was the old turreted castle of the ancient Counts, sheltering its clustered dependencies of convents, churches, and palazzi! (See PLATE VIII.)

The Forca Carusa is a pass over the mountains on the north-east side of the Lake of Fucino; and as we turned our backs on its beautiful waters, and ascended a long and barren hill, by a stony road, and in the face of a very cold wind, we cast many a look of regret over the bright scenes we had left, the fertile plain of Avezzano, and the far crags beyond Trasacco. For an hour, nothing could be less interesting than the narrow plain, walled in by low hills,—scattered flocks of sheep, guarded by angry dogs, and stunted shrubs at intervals, the only objects of attention; and, as Macintoshes and handkerchiefs were in great request, we were glad to be at the north side of the pass, leading down to the valleys of Gagliano and Goriano, whence it was most refreshing to gaze on a picture full of all kinds of mountain-grandeur, wood, valley, towns, snowy peaks, and clouds veiling the highest range of all.

By long winding paths we descended to Goriano Siculi, (or Goriano Sicco,[a]) a little town containing seven hundred inhabitants. It stands in a

[a] Giustiniani.

tranquil valley, where we were glad to stable our horses, and refresh ourselves on raw ham, bread, and an omelette, at a little *Osteria*. No one, until after much travelling in Italy, can be aware of the universality of omelettes: omelettes plain, with tomatas, with artichokes, or with garlic; not a bad dish, if well contrived, but rather tiresome by over-repetition. Of Goriano Siculi little is to be said, but that its church-tower was rather awry from the effects of a recent thunderbolt; there is, however, a most Poussin-like view of the town from the hill beyond it, which, after an hour's rest, we began to ascend by steep windings.



GORIANO SICULI.

At the summit, a vast and new scene was opened to us. We had passed out of the land of the Marsi, and were entering that of the ancient Peligni, separated from their neighbours of old by high mountain-walls, over which the stupendous Maiella reigned pre-eminent. A beautiful place, indeed, is the vale or plain of Solmona, twelve Neapolitan miles in length, and three or four wide;[a] almost every spot in it cultivated with vines, and corn, olives, and garden-fruit, for which, especially melons, the district is famous. Solmona, the Sulmo of antiquity, stands at one of the extremi-

[a] Sci. Mazzella.



E. Lear del et lith.

SOLMONA

ties of the vale; Corfinium, or Pentima, at the other: the towns of Pettorano, Bugnara, Introdacqua, Frezza, R. Casale, S. Vittorino, Rajano, and Pratola, are also within its limits.

All these, gleaming and sparkling from the bosom of this beautiful vale, were before us, as we went down the long descent, and through the little town of Rajano, and along a grass road between continual vineyards, crossed by numerous streams, which are conducted into every part of the valley, from the river Sagittaria, for the purposes of irrigation. Thus at length we reached Solmona (See PLATE IX.), which stands on an elevated ridge, between two small rivers, the courses of which are marked by thick poplars.

A ruined church, a rent wall, a leaning house, or a tower out of drawing, speak of the earthquakes which have so frequently desolated this interesting spot, well known as the birth-place of Ovid, and still, after many sieges and other calamitous vicissitudes, a fine city. We admired its well-paved streets and numerous shops, (half of which seemed confectioners', for the confectionery of Solmona is famous all over Italy,) its cafés, palazzi, and churches, as we passed along the principal thoroughfare, and made our way to the great deserted convent, or hospital, now used as the inn. The interior, however, of that refuge was so uninviting, that we resolved to go on eight or nine miles further to Popoli, only resting our horses for an hour; a duty which we accomplished for them in a vast stable, full of mules, the jingling of whose bells was distracting: meanwhile, we rambled over the city, and indulged in *Limonata* at various cafés.

There are many objects of interest in Solmona: the Market-place with its picturesque aqueduct, overlooked by a beautiful Gothic arch, the remains of a Church which fell in the last century; the great Church of Sant' Annunziata; the Cathedral of San Pamfilo; and several Gothic doors and windows in various parts of the city. A statue of Ovid, a very poor one, adorns the main street. On Saturday the number of costume-wearing market-women flocking to Solmona, the Sottintendenza or chief town of the district, are very amusing. Generally speaking, there is but little variety or character of dress throughout the Abruzzi provinces: the peasants are usually clad in dark-blue or red woollen clothes, both male and female; and the latter, excepting in a

few places, wear the handkerchief on the head in a slovenly manner, very different from the neat head-dress near Rome.[a] To make amends, however, we were not annoyed by begging, and on our route hitherto had seen but little poverty. (See PLATE X.)

The history of Solmona[b] is a tissue of evils,—war, famine, plague, and earthquake; and, that it now exists at all, is a matter of wonder. In 1455 and 1456 it was nearly destroyed by earthquake, and on the 3rd of November, 1706, fell almost entirely from the same cause, numbers of its inhabitants being killed. Pope Paul V. granted the principality of Solmona to his nephew, Camillo Borghese; but the present Borghesi have no longer any possessions among the Peligni.[c]

The sun was low in the west ere we remounted our horses. A good carriage-road runs through the valley at the foot of the mountain of the Morrone, which bears on its barren sides the cell where S. Pietro del



S. SPIRITO DI SOLMONA

Morrone, afterwards Pope Celestino V. lived for so many years. Below the solitary hermitage is the Monastery of S. Spirito di Solmona, founded by Pope

[a] Two villages, Introdacqua and Pettorano, within a short distance of Solmona, may be particularly excepted. The linen cloth forming the head-dress is worn of great length; and there are other little distinctions of costume.

[b] Mem. Sto. della Città di Solmona.

[c] Pachichelli, iii. 19.



SOLMONA

Celestino V., but now used as a poor-house for the three Abruzzi. It is a picturesque edifice, some distance from the high-road; and its tall Campanile is seen all over the Pianura of Solmona.

Rienzi, the last of the Tribunes, is said to have fled, disguised as a monk, from Rome to the convent of S. Spirito; and the monastery in the plain of Solmona is pointed out as his retreat: though the anonymous author of his life clearly indicates the cell in the Maiella, also known as S. Spirito, as his refuge, which it indeed more probably would be than the sumptuous establishment in the valley. "*Per la paura de li potenti di Roma, giò come fraticello, giacendo per la montagna di Maiella con romiti e persone di penitenza.*"[a]

The repetition of the well-known history of Pope Celestino V. may be forgiven, as an illustration of one of the scenes of his life. The Hermit of the Morrone, Pietro di Isernia, was born in 1215, and resided in the cell immediately above the monastery of S. Spirito until 1239, when, the repute of his sanctity having attracted many visitors to his solitude, he retired to a cave among the rocks of the higher parts of the Maiella until 1294; when, the Papal throne having remained vacant from the death of Pope Nicholas IV. in 1292, Pietro was chosen to fill his place, and was crowned in the church of S. Maria di Collemaggio in Aquila, 29th of August, 1294, when no less than two hundred thousand persons are said to have been present.

On the 12th of December of the same year he publicly renounced the dignities which a long life of solitude had ill-fitted him for bearing, and retired once more to his hermit's cell of the Morrone. Hence, however, he was taken by the orders of Pope Boniface VIII. (Caetani), and shut up in the castle of Fumone, above Anagni, where he died, May 19th, 1296.[b] His bones were brought from Ferentino to Aquila in 1327.[c d]

Beyond S. Spirito we passed on our right a strange inconvenient-looking town, Rocca Casale, a pyramid of houses crowned by an old castle, surprisingly piled up against the mountain-side; and, further on, we turned into the narrowing valley by which the Pescara flows to the sea. Shortly after dark we reached Popoli, (nine miles from Solmona,) a bustling, narrow-streeted, dirty

[a] V. di Cola di Rienzi, ii. 258.

[b] Vita di S. P. Celestin Papa V. Cirillo.

[c] Cirillo, 19.

[d] According to Pachichelli (iii. 19) the nail by which he was murdered, half a palm in length, was shown in one of the chapels of the Convent of S. Spirito.

town, containing 3800 inhabitants, situated at the junction of the three roads leading to Aquila, Solmona, and Chieti, and therefore called the key of the three Abruzzi. Happily it contained an inn, where we found no very bad accommodation.

30th July, 1843. Leaving Gridiron and Iron-gray to a day's peaceful possession of a good stable, we set out early on a visit to the remains of ancient Corfinium, the once-celebrated capital of the Peligni, and the queen of the allies against Rome during the Marsic, or Social, war.[a] We strolled to the little town of Pentima, about two miles from Popoli, a place of no pretension either to interest or beauty: beyond it is an elevated plain, overlooking the whole of the valley of Solmona; and here antiquaries place the site of Corfinium. Of that great city, little now remains: foundations of brick-work; walls of *opus reticulatum* peeping above the soil; some traces of aqueducts; and two or three high masses of ruin, supposed to be portions of a temple. Perhaps the earthquakes in the last century may have completed the work of desolation; since Alberti, in 1596, writes, "*Si veggono molte rovine di grand' edifici*;"[b] and other authors speak as if there had been more witnesses of past grandeur than exist at present. The Church of San Pelino (a building worth the attention of architects, of which the only notice I can find relates to its restoration by a Bishop Giovanni in 1081,)[c] stands by the side of these ruins, and, together, they form a group whose grand and solitary character cannot fail to strike the traveller. (See PLATE XI.) Corfinium may have existed as a name until the tenth century;[d] but during the Lombards, and their county or Gastaldato of Balva, it seems to have disappeared. We lingered long by these classic remains, and returned by the hot valley of the Sagittaria, whose banks were blackened by droves of recumbent pigs, to our abode at Popoli.

July 31st, 1843. We set off by day-break, in order that we might reach Chieti (the capital of Abruzzo Citeriore, distant twenty-one miles from Popoli,) before the heat of the day; a project which we were not to execute. We

[a] Cramer, i. 333.
[b] Fr. L. Alberti, p. 256.
[c] Memorie Storiche de' Peligni. D. E. di Mattei.
[d] Del Re.



E. Lear del et lith

SAN PETER

went by the side of the Pescara (the ancient Aternus); from above which there is rather a fine view of Popoli, over-looked by the ruins of the old Castle of the Cantelmi. Thence our road led through a wild and gloomy pass, until we came to the fertile ground opening to the Adriatic: here our respectable steed Irongray cast a shoe, from which ill-fortune we were obliged to cross the Pescara to Tor di Passere, a small and uninteresting town, where we found a blacksmith.

Close to the river stand the remains of the celebrated Monastery of San Clemente, founded by the Emperor Louis VIII. in the ninth century. There is much worth inspection in this curious old building: but our haste did not allow of lingering; and we cared the less for the disappointment, as I felt sure, at that time, of returning to the spot.

Tor di Passere is uninteresting in the extreme, and will only live in our memory from the exceeding fuss the whole police of the town made on our account. I had wandered round it to while away the time during which our horse was being shod, when a hue and cry was raised which would astonish any one who did not know the distrust with which strangers, who enter the provinces of Teramo or Abruzzo Ulteriore Primo, are looked upon. Having no *Carta di Passo* for this division, we were stopped forthwith, and only allowed to proceed on showing the letters we bore, and on promising to escape from the tabooed territory as soon as we could. We re-crossed the Pescara, therefore, and were once more on the high-road to Chieti; but the great heat of the day, combined with the little interest possessed by the scenery, made the journey far from a pleasant one. Nor did the high clay ridge, on which Chieti stood afar off, offer any recompense in perspective.

Long indeed it was before we arrived at the gates of the capital of Abruzzo Citeriore, by apparently endless windings of monotonous, though good, carriage-road: the ascent to this ancient city, (formerly Teate of the Marrucini,[a]) is truly "*un vero Calvario.*" The view from the summit of the hill is extensive and magnificent in the extreme; yet, excepting perhaps the group of mountains about the Gran Sasso,—that which terminates the fine chain bounding the plain to the right,—the whole scene has little attraction for a landscape-painter, from its extreme panoramic vastness. To the left, the

[a] Cramer, Anc. It. i. 340.

huge Maiella stands almost alone; and beyond, plains of undulating clay ridges, clad with vineyards, and spotted with countless towns and villages, stretch southward as far as eye can reach, and eastward to the broad blue Adriatic.

Chieti is a large bustling city, containing about fourteen thousand inhabitants, often called "*il Napoli dei tre Abruzzi*," from its liveliness and population. The best accounts of its buildings, &c. may be found in the Hon. K. Craven's Tour in the Abruzzi; and in a very interesting little work, containing much information about the whole province, (especially its botanical productions,) "Relazione del Viaggio fatto in alcuni luoghi di Abruzzo Citeriore; dal Cav. Michele Tenore:" a book no one should visit Chieti without procuring. We found an inn, the Aquila d'Oro, a strange straggling place, with one immense bed-room containing six beds; a common occurrence in these parts of Italy, where they have no idea of any one being so fastidious as to dislike sharing a sleeping-room with chance passengers. What is worse, they will not let you pay for the whole, which one would willingly do; for that, say they, would be unjust to after-comers, who have a right to hire unoccupied beds. Fortunately, we were the only strangers in the *Locanda*, so we slept in our six beds accordingly; a repose we were not sorry to have after an early dinner.

Our evening passed in procuring food for our horses, (no very easy matter,) and in wandering about the city, which, after all, had no great charms for us; and we left the promenade on the ramparts, thinking, that were we never to see Chieti again, we should not be exceedingly sorry. We also delivered a letter of introduction to the Marchese San Giovanni, Intendente of the province, a very agreeable person; who, at our request, procured a letter for us to an inhabitant of Civita di Penna, where we intended to halt the following night.

August 1st, 1843. K., wishing to see Pescara, set off at sun-rise in a *caratella;* but I, having a mania for walking, followed on foot; a choice I repented of before reaching the end of eight long miles on a dusty uninteresting road. Pescara, a most dull little town, stands at the mouth of its namesake river; and, though now so mean a place, was formerly a fortress of importance, and is supposed to stand on the site of the ancient Aternum[a]

[a] Cramer, Anc. It. i. 338. Much information concerning the present state of its river, Pescara, may be gained from a pamphlet entitled "La Navigazione della Pescara, di Giu. Liberatore."

of the Vestini. Its modern associations of interest may be summed up shortly: it recalls the death of the celebrated commander Sforza, who was drowned while crossing the river in 1423; and it gave the title of Marchese di Pescara to D'Avalos, the husband of Vittoria Colonna.

After bathing in the Adriatic, and deciding—on having explored its environs—that Pescara was to us utterly unprofitable, saving a distant view of the Gran Sasso, in combination with its long walls, and its flat, sandy foreground, we returned in our *caratella* to Chieti; and that city, after a dinner and *siesta* at *mezzodì*, we left with but little regret early in the afternoon; first purchasing some capital straw-hats, which they make better in the province of Teramo than anywhere else.

Once more down the tiresome hill of Chieti, and to the banks of the broad Pescara, over which we passed in a ferry-boat, and took our course by rather indistinct tracks towards the Gran Sasso, in the vicinity of which great mountain stands Cività di Penna. All the country we passed is a weary monotony of undulations: a path leads up a long clay hill sprinkled with vines and a few trees, and at its top you hail the distant Gran Sasso, and dream you may go on plain ground for an hour or so; when, lo! down you drop into a valley, with a dawdling stream or perhaps the dry bed of a torrent at its bottom, a cottage or two overlooking its winding way; having overcome all of which, you commence climbing path No. 2, up a clay hill exactly resembling No. 1; and this occurs so perpetually, and without a shade of variety, that a journey in the neighbourhood of Chieti is of a most tread-mill nature. At every ascent the Gran Sasso seems to stand on a plain, though these tantalizing ridges and ravines prevent your having any view but that from the top of each successive hill. All around one sees towns, though none apparently of great beauty; and we passed Pianello and Loretto, both of which, though possessing little picturesqueness in themselves, stand finely perched on their several ridges, and rejoice in a grand back-ground of the Monte Corno. At last, nearly at sunset, we arrived at Cività di Penna, the ancient Pinna of the Vestini,[a] which stands on an eminence, rising below the mountain-ridge, called, if I remember rightly, Siella: part of the chain whose most elevated point is the Gran

[a] Cramer, Anc. It. i. 336.

Sasso or Monte Corno. The modern town (I believe there are few, if any, vestiges of the old one) is eminently beautiful, built on two peaks or summits of a hill, and containing many good edifices: the two principal streets are very steep, but well paved with brick. It contains eight thousand inhabitants. (See PLATE XII.)

In vain, on entering the town, we enquired for a *Locanda*, an *Osteria*, a stable: all Città di Penna seemed guiltless of such common-place conveniences. Nor were we at all better off, when, sending our introductory letter, we received an answer, that such a house would shelter us, and such a stable our horses; a reception so different to that afforded us by our Marsican friends, that we were not a little surprised. And, having sought the stable, it was so cold and damp, that one of our horses was instantly taken ill; and, as we could not persuade anybody to bring in food for them, we adjourned once more to the market-place, where we waited long, in vain, for any assistance:—*this* man had a stable, but had lost the key; another had some hay, but was gone to a neighbouring town:—and thus, these and other equally apropos suggestions were all we had to amuse us till the arrival of Don Andrea Giardini, the Mayor or Syndic of the town, to whom meanwhile I had applied.

Charming little Syndic of Syndics! Did you not instantly bring forth your own groom, open your stables, and cause the unlucky Gridiron and Iron-gray to be refreshed forthwith? And shall we not always remember you with a hearty good-will—the sole oasis in that barren haunt of apathy and inhospitality?

It was now, however, too late in the evening to change the nasty lodgings we had gone to on the recommendation of our new acquaintance; and most particularly filthy ones they were. Sleep, from the little we saw of our room, was not to be expected; and, to add to our sorrows, the police declared our passports out of all order, (not being *Carte di Passo* for the province,) although signed by the Governor of Chieti himself: so we had the choice given us of remaining at Città di Penna till an express could be received from Chieti at Città Sant' Angelo, the *Capoluogo* of the district, or of going back to Chieti ourselves. We chose the former alternative.



CITTA DI PENNE

August 2, 1843. Prisoners as we were, we resolved on changing our obnoxious abode; and our good genius the Syndic accordingly found us charming lodgings at the house of Signor Michelloni, a *caffetiere*, whose rooms and beds were unexceptionable. This was something: but, indignant with Città di Penna in general, and our acquaintances of last night in particular, we retired to an adjacent convent, and passed the morning in rambling over its gardens, and sitting in a fig-tree, forming plans for the morrow. A surprising dinner at midday augmented our esteem for the Syndic and Signor Michelloni, who supplied us most profusely with liqueurs, *Rosolio*, &c., for the manufacture of which Città di Penna is renowned.

The Doctor of the town also sent his card, and an immense batter-pudding; by way, we supposed, (and not a bad way either,) of testifying his regret at our last night's reception.

Towards evening we began our journey to Città Sant' Angelo, with the Syndic's groom as guide; a route of which I will only say, that it was a counterpart of that tread-mill of hill and hollow by which we had been victimized in our ride from Chieti. The hills were full of chasms and cracks; hideous clay ridges, ungraced by a shrub, or even a rock, or a pebble; and the hollows contained rivers; after fording the last of which, the moon rose and lighted us on, by tedious mule-tracks, to Città Sant' Angelo, (supposed the ancient Angulus[a] of the Vestini,) where we arrived when all men were fast asleep. Not having had any rest during the previous night, we were pretty well tired, and glad to exchange the continual feeling of being about to fall off our horses down an unknown depth, for that of reposing in the kitchen of an *Osteria*, whose good-natured *Oste* we knocked up. Moreover, K. discovered some very good-looking sausages: so we had them cooked, and made a very comfortable supper by the aid of whiskey and water, the wine being undrinkable.

August 3, 1843. Very early we waited on Don Bernardo Ranaldi, who had just received an express from Chieti, stating our respectability, and enjoining him to let us go wherever and do whatever we pleased — tidings

[a] Cramer, Anc. It. i. 336.

which greatly enlivened us. The Sub-governor also gave us some excellent coffee, and invited us to his country-house; a politeness we were obliged to decline, as directly after our interview we recommenced our travels on the treadmill, and were at Signor Michelloni's once more before noon.

We had resolved to cross the high mountain-ridge separating the provinces of Teramo and Aquila, but did not exactly know the best course to take, as we had not a map: but somebody having suggested that we might pass immediately above Città di Penna, and sleep at Villa Santa Lucia, a small village, going on the next day to Aquila, we agreed to do so; and, with a presentiment of the barrenness awaiting us in those remote places, we did unusual justice to Signor Michelloni's good cheer before we started. We wished our friend the Syndic good-bye with regret, but had none for Città di Penna, which we left about two o'clock in the afternoon, rather gladly than otherwise.

We went straight up the face of the mountain to a little village, Montebello, whence the view was vast and map-like, but by no means beautiful. A long and steep ascent succeeded, which we climbed on foot gaily enough, for the air was fresh at that great height. But alas for poor Gridiron! who fell suddenly lame from some unknown cause, and sadly destroyed my pleasure by his uneasy progress thenceforward.

After a great toil to the summit, we struck into dark paths through wide beech forests broken by gray rocks, whence, at intervals, the view of the Gran Sasso, rising above an unbroken distance of wood, was infinitely grand. At length, long after the great prospect towards the Adriatic had been fairly shut out, we opened on a broad green valley encircled by rocky hills, and full of cattle of all kinds. It was near sunset; and yet two peasants, whom we met, declared that Villa Santa Lucia was "*lontano assai*," and there was not any habitation nearer.

There was no remedy: we passed over the lonely, quiet *Pianura*, and proceeded to scale its boundary, a high and weary ridge of rock,—sore work for poor old Gridiron. At its summit, how different a view surprised us! that to the north had appeared as a vast plain, but tangled and cut up into a thousand gutter-like divisions: here, we came on a wild chaos of mountain-tops, ridge above ridge, peak above peak: the high line of the Marsic mountains, the noble Velino, an interminable perspective of Apennines—all seemed

below our feet; a dark purple world, still and solemn, outlined with the utmost delicacy against the clear sky, where the daylight yet lingered along an horizon of golden red. These unexpected effects of beauty constitute one of the chief charms of such methodless rambles as ours.

Immensely below us was the deep valley to which our course was to be directed; and there, about the second hour of the night,[a] we arrived well tired with our long day's journey. Villa Santa Lucia, a poor village, but our home for the night, did not look especially inviting; neither did the house of Don Domenico Nunzio, to whose care we had been recommended by our anonymous friend at Città di Penna.

Yet this, though dark and small, was not nearly so unpleasant an abode as our first at Città di Penna, inasmuch as the poor people who received us here offered all they had with the greatest cheerfulness; nor were the rooms so irretrievably filthy. But what a stable! How often, on opening the door, did startled hens dash wildly against the candle and leave us in darkness! How often, when we had effected an entrance, did misguided calves, and eccentric goats, pigs, and asses, rush against us to our utter discomfort! And, having settled our steeds, how queer a place was shewn us for our supper and sleeping-room! a sort of granary, holding one diminutive bed, and a table to match; all the rest of the space being choked up with sacks, barrels, baskets, hams, &c. &c. But the apologies made for all these inconveniences were profuse, and attention was shewn us far more than could have been expected: so we congratulated ourselves on being once more in the province of Aquila, whose bounds are defined by the mountain-wall we had so recently climbed.

Having tossed up who should have the bed, it fell *to* me, and directly afterwards fell *under* me, because it had but three legs, and one of those but feeble. As for K., he took up his quarters upon the small table, and we talked and slept as much as we might, till day broke; when a sound of Choc! choc! choc! pervaded the room, and forthwith numbers of little chanticleers rushed from all corners, and, mounting the table, were astonished to find their accustomed crowing-place already occupied.

[a] Ave Maria, or the termination of the day, is always one half-hour after sunset throughout Italy; and the succeeding hours are called one, two, three, &c. of the night.

August 4, 1843. A particularly horrid day, with no one redeeming quality, beauty, or novelty, to note down as a white mark in our journal: a mud-coloured sirocco atmosphere, whereby one felt as if in an air-pump; a burning sun to boot, and a long toil over a most wearisome country! A rocky pass took us from the uninteresting valley of Villa Santa Lucia to the vicinity of Rocca Calascio, (a little cluster of dwellings, four thousand eight hundred Paris feet[a] above the level of the sea,) and thence through Calascio, a long straggling town, also on a mountain-ridge of great elevation, along whose steep sides of barren ugliness we continued to toil *ad infinitum*, till we were half blind from scorching heat and dulness. As for me, I walked all day, not being able to keep awake on my horse.

At Rocca San Stefano, a helpless-looking town, sticking against a mournfully bare hill-side, some respectable people hailed us from a large house near the road, and insisted on our refreshing ourselves and horses; so I should not have said that the day was destitute of its white mark. These good people regaled us with biscuits and *Limonata*, and pressed us very much to stay; but we preferred spinning out our disagreeable thread all at once: so down we went, and up and down again, all hideousness and sirocco, to Barisciano, whence, to make bad worse, we had to follow the high-road to Aquila, twelve or fourteen miles of dust, and ineffable stupidity. Indeed, I was mightily disappointed in the Valley of Aquila, which, although full of cultivation, (more particularly of almond-trees,) is of so great a width as to be more like a plain; and its sides are enclosed by bleak, bare mountains, not very striking in form, though grand from their loftiness. Aquila itself, once so important a city, and yet holding its place as capital of the province of Abruzzo Ulteriore Secondo, stands on an eminence commanding the whole of the valley, and allowing a passage only for the river Aterno between its base and the mountains on one side. To this hill you ascend by slow windings; and, when the city was in its palmy days, it must have had an imposing appearance. Even now, the Castle overlooking all, the Cupola of San Bernardino, with various Campanili and Palazzi of a delicate-coloured stone, throw an air of magnificence over the first approach.

[a] Del Re., vol. ii. p. 163.

It would be difficult to enter the precincts of Aquila without feelings of interest and curiosity. The scene of factious dissension during the times of Guelph and Ghibelline, and for centuries, one of the most important cities in southern Italy, "*È l'Aquila,*" says Porzio,[a] who wrote in the fifteenth century, "*città degli Abruzzi fra altissimi monti posta, e dalle rovine de' luoghi convicini tanto cresciuta, che di uomini, di armi, e di richezze era la prima riputata dopo Napoli.*" The cold look of desertion in its well-paved streets struck us forcibly as we passed through them; and we acknowledged that its title, "la Roma degli Abruzzi," was well merited by its character of departed grandeur,—its fine palaces, gloomy and uninhabited; its splendid convents and churches, and its extensive walls enclosing vineyards where once were flourishing quarters of the town. A scanty population, and the total absence of bustle in so large a place, increased its resemblance to the eternal city; and this melancholy magnificence is well supported by the harsh line of mountains, unadorned with vegetation, that bounds the view on every side. Aquila, however, can boast of one advantage unknown to its more prosperous fellow-city Chieti, namely, a really good inn: "Il Sole" might do credit to any place in southern Europe, and in its spacious chambers we were right glad to repose.

Most authorities agree that Aquila was founded by Conrad in 1254: some antiquarians make the Emperor Frederic II. its first originator; while others affirm it to have been an existing city in the time of the Lombards, and only enlarged by Frederic.[b] All agree that the union of the fugitive population of the ancient cities of Amiternum, Forcona, Foruli, &c. whose sites are in its immediate neighbourhood, was the first cause of the rise of the modern city: nor does the well-established fact of Conrad having granted it privileges, &c. at all preclude its having had an existence long previously. Its name is most frequently supposed to be an allusion to the Imperial Eagle, under whose support it was first brought into power, as a check to the Roman Pontiffs, on the very borders of their dominions.

In spite of its Ghibelline origin, Aquila seems early to have become a partisan of the opposite faction; and it was destroyed by Manfred, and set up again by the Popes accordingly.

[a] Porzio, Cong. Baroni, p. 60.

[b] Giustiniani, Diz.

It was stedfast to King Charles I. of Anjou during, and long after, the endeavour of Corradino to regain the kingdom; yet we read[a] of its having formed itself into a republic under one Nicola dell' Isola about 1281, which state of things seems to have continued until Nicola was poisoned by some of the nobles, whose oppression he had controlled. Nicola dell' Isola seems to have been an extraordinary man; for two envoys, sent by King Charles II. (one his own son) to punish the offender, returned to Naples with a full conviction of the integrity of his conduct: a persuasion, however, which may have been not a little enforced by the champion of Aquila himself at the head of his six thousand men.

The city was constantly torn by internal dissensions during the interregnum of the Popes, and the absence of Charles II. in 1292; but peace and order reigned, for once, during the short time that Pope Celestine V. wore the tiara, during which he resided in Aquila. (*See page* 31.) The early part of the reign of Robert I. was also a period of comparative quiet, always excepting the burnings and killings which occupied the Aquilani among themselves. In 1299 and 1315, the city is recorded to have been almost totally destroyed by earthquakes; and as soon as it was rebuilt, with greater splendour and strength, the unquiet Aquilani were again at their old work of destruction among the rival towns near them, for which delinquencies heavy fines were imposed upon them. In 1310 and 1327, King Robert resided in Aquila in great state and magnificence, receiving ambassadors, &c.[b]

The family of the Camponeschi seem at this time to have possessed the chief power in the city; and pages full of contention and turbulence, through which their name stands prominent, may be read in Bernardino Cirillo's annals of his native place. "*Surse in Aquila,*" says Porzio,[c] "*la famiglia de' Camponeschi, potente tanto che quasi ne avea preso il Principato: e quando i Rè di Napoli volevano dalla città alcuna cosa ottenere, era loro il mestiere guadagnar prima i Camponeschi.*" Throughout the long reign of Giovanna I. the history of Aquila is little but a variety of horrors. After the murder of her husband Andrea, the factions of the Queen (who had married Louis of Taranto), and of Louis of Hungary, her late husband's brother, divided the whole kingdom; and Aquila was besieged by Carlo of Durazzo for two months, during which

[a] Cirillo, p. 13. [b] Ibid. p. 17. [c] Porzio, p. 60.

it was held out by Lalle Camponeschi for Louis. On the flight of the Queen from Italy, Lalle was made Grand Chamberlain of the whole kingdom by Louis, and must have been a man of no mean talent; for on the return of Giovanna, and the consequent change of fortune which befell the adherents of Louis of Hungary, Lalle Camponeschi not only contrived to retain his great influence, but his office at the Neapolitan Court.[a] Meanwhile the terrible plague and famine of 1348 devastated Aquila, and swept off one-third of its inhabitants; and in the following year so fatal an earthquake destroyed the city, that the remaining population deserted its ruins, and were only persuaded to rebuild it by the all-powerful Lalle Camponeschi, who did not long survive these events, being stabbed in 1354[b] by a follower of Filippo of Taranto, then Governor of the Abruzzi for Giovanna. In 1355 the city was placed under an interdict by Innocent VI. for rebellion; and one grows weary of reading of the contentions of two Kings and two Popes, the Durazzo and Anjou factions, interdicts, excommunications and rebellions, and earthquakes. In 1364 another pestilence carried off more than ten thousand of the inhabitants of Aquila; and its history, till the murder of Giovanna I. in 1381, and through the remainder of the fourteenth century, is one tissue of rebellion and internal discord, in which the Camponeschi seem, as usual, to have been the principal actors.

The Aquilani declared for Queen Giovanna II. on her deposition by Pope Martin V. in 1419, and, in consequence, suffered a siege of thirteen months from the partisans of Louis III. of Anjou; during which the city held out against the celebrated leader, Braccio Fortone, who was killed beneath the walls in 1424. After the death of Giovanna II., until 1441, when Alfonso conquered the whole of the kingdom, and when there was a short interval of quiet, discord seems to have claimed Aquila as her favourite abode. Rebellions in 1460, the war of the Barons in 1484, the expedition of Charles VIII. of France (for whom the Aquilani openly declared), are among the principal events affecting Aquila until the possession of the *Regno* by the Spanish dynasty; events each fraught with years of disturbance and misery.[c]

[a] "*Camponesco si adatte alle circonstanze*," says Antinori, vol. ii. [b] Antinori, vol. ii.

[c] The principal part of this information concerning Aquila is drawn from the work of Bernardino Cirillo, called "Annali della Città dell' Aquila," printed about 1550. Mention is made of the first printing-press in Italy having been established in Aquila by Adam Rothweiler, in Giustiniani's "Saggio sulla Tipo. del Reg. di Napoli," p. 101.

In 1528 this restless city rebelled against the authority of the Emperor Charles V., and was fined one hundred and twenty thousand scudi by Philibert Prince of Orange, who built the castle now commanding the whole city, and, it is said, levied farther exactions to the amount of above three hundred thousand dollars.[a]

During the rest of the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries Aquila seems to have been fast sinking to that secondary position which it now holds: nor is it worth while to record more of its history in detail.

In 1703[b] a most fearful earthquake occurred throughout the Abruzzi, from the 14th to the 21st of January, and great part of Aquila was again reduced to ruins: two thousand four hundred persons perished by the falling of houses in the city alone, and great numbers were wounded; above twenty thousand persons perished within the province.

After this weary list of plague, famine, earthquake, oppression, internal discord, and rebellion, one wonders rather to see Aquila as flourishing as it now is, than that it should not be more so. Nor has the history of centuries brought wisdom to the inmates of this unfortunate city; for it is but a very few years ago that fresh conspiracies and disturbances provoked the anger of the Government, and were the cause of several of its noblest palaces being at this day tenantless. Thus much by way of history of Aquila the fallen.

The Intendente or Governor of Aquila, to whom we had a letter of introduction, was at the Baths of Antrodoco, for the benefit of his health: so we occupied our afternoon in a stroll about the city, which afforded plenty of amusement in the variety of bits of Gothic architecture of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries; doors, windows, &c. &c. presenting themselves at every step. Few towns, indeed, possess more interesting studies for an architect.

The quiet loneliness of the place had also its charms for us; and we returned with favourable impressions of Aquila to our inn, close to whose gate stands the Tower of Margaret of Austria's palace.

In passing through several of the streets we were struck by the harmonious singing or chanting of the workmen—blacksmiths and others—at their labour.

[a] Giustiniani.

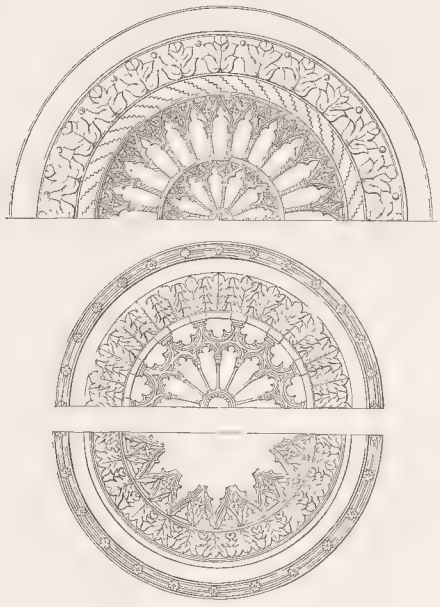
[b] Geo. Baglivi, p. 25.



CHURCH OF SANTA GIUSTA IN AQUILA

August 5, 1843. We devoted the morning to visiting churches, &c.: but of the buildings of Aquila I shall say little; partly, because to describe them would require the pen of an architect, and because many of the principal edifices are already known to the public by the Hon. K. Craven's Tour. The Church of Santa Maria di Collemaggio is highly interesting, and as remarkable for the beauty of its architectural details as for the whimsical appearance of its principal front, which is formed of red and white marble so arranged as to have rather the look of Chinese workmanship. (*See vignette, title-page.*) The date of its erection is about 1260, but the interior is entirely modernized; though on the walls there are some very beautiful frescoes, representing

the life of San Benedetto, each compartment containing several animals finely executed. The situation of Santa Maria di Collemaggio is very striking: it



WINDOWS IN S. M DI COLLEMAGGIO, AQUILA.

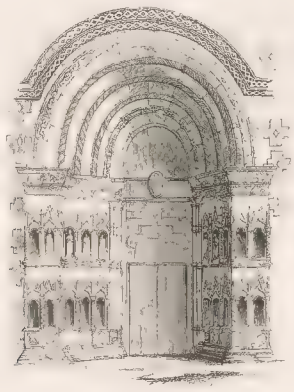
stands alone at a short distance from the city, overlooking the wild vale of Aquila, with the pale peaks of Monte Corno shining against the dark-blue



SIDE DOOR OF S M. DI COLLEMAGGIO



sky. The aisles were silent and deserted,—the whole building in a neglected condition; and the mind involuntarily recurred, in contrast, to the coronation of Pope Celestine, in 1294, and the two hundred thousand spectators of that scene of pomp.[a]



ENTRE DOOR OF S. M . I COLLEMAGG O

We set off late to Antrodoco. On looking back, there is a fine general view of the position of the city (see PLATE XIII.); but the spreading hill of Aquila was soon shut out, as the road wound among barren mountains. Cività Thomasa (perhaps the ancient Foruli) was on our right, but the shortness of our time prevented our making any departures from the beaten track. The whole line of road up the pass, at the top of which is a wretched little village called Rocca di Corno, disappointed us, as we had heard exaggerated accounts of its general character: it is certainly greatly inferior in grandeur and beauty to many passes in Cumberland, until, from a turn in the road (where a very picturesque Chapel, called the Madonna delle Grotte, looks

[a] Having very little knowledge of architecture, I selected (on my return to Aquila in 1844; see Excursion, No. III.) as illustrative vignettes, such buildings, &c. as pleased my eye, or were pointed out by the Aquilani as the most remarkable,—the Churches of S. Giusta, S. Maria Paganica, S. Domenico, S. M. del Soccorso, &c., &c. The sketch of the Gothic houses (see Excursion, No. II.) will convey an idea of the style of building observable in many of the streets of Aquila; but that city should be visited to enable one to form any idea of the abundance of details which may be gathered in it for the architect's portfolio.

down the pass), the valley suddenly narrows and becomes at every step of a more wild character.



LA MADONNA DELLE GROTTE.

Hence you go down by a most zig-zag route (supposed to represent a carriage-road) to the valley, where the torrent, whose course you have been accompanying, joins the river Velino, and where it has pleased the founders of Antrodoco to place their town, mainly because it is protected by a rock, the castle on which commands three formidable passes. From the last few turns of the spiral descent, where a vast rock overhangs the road, there is a very grand view of the town at the foot of immense and gloomy hills; but it was so nearly dark on our arrival that we could only gaze with awe into the solemn abyss, where an indistinct mass of towers and roofs was alone discernible.

Antrodoco was the ancient Interocrea,[a] a station on the Via Salara: of its modern history I know little, except that it was destroyed by the people of Aquila in 1364,[b] in one of their frantic expeditions.

A very vile *Osteria* was the only place we could discover as a night's lodging, and a sorry stable for our horses; so we bemoaned ourselves accordingly,—the more that two very wooden-looking slices of ham and one egg were all we could get for supper. "*Mangiono tutto i bagnanti*," quoth the host: "*i bagnanti*" being the bathers, or invalids, who resort to the mineral waters of Antrodoco, and fill the town for a short summer-season, during which these unwonted lodgers consume all the food in the market. Under these adversi-

[a] Cramer, Anc. It. i. 318. [b] Cirillo, 43.



ties, great was our pleasure at a message from Prince Giardinelli, (the Intendente of Abruzzo Secondo Ulteriore, to whom we had despatched our credentials,) praying us to sup with him forthwith; and although we sent a reply touching our lack of personal ornament after our long journey, yet his politeness overcame all our scruples, and to supper we went.

The Prince was a lively little man of friendly manners, who spoke English. Near him was a sweet little girl, his only child, of about ten years of age; and about the room were various *uffiziali* attached to his suite, and sundry *personaggi* of the town, who were paying their evening devoirs. These by degrees subsided, and we were left with the Governor and Donna Caterina, who, after a long hour in which I was more than half asleep, took us into a room where was a table, plate, covers, &c.

And what did we not see when those covers were removed! A positive plain English-looking roast leg of mutton, in all its simplicity and good odour! And two dishes, one of simple mealy boiled potatoes, the other ditto baked! Add to this a bottle of excellent Champagne—and imagine our feelings! (The secret of these amazing luxuries was, that the Prince and his cook had both been in England.)

Nor, when all this was discussed, had we anything more to do with our vile *Osteria:* our *roba* had been taken to the comfortable private house of a Don Luigi Mozzetti, whither we proceeded, to sleep until daybreak should disturb us.

August 6, 1843. We rose very early, and were greeted by a regular English breakfast, and by the same kind hospitality as yesterday evening.

Before the sun rose above the mountains, we were walking up the pass through which the Velino rushes, — often a dangerous neighbour to Antrodoco, which it has more than once inundated with little warning. Near the river, on a broad flat piece of ground among trees and vineyards, are numbers of little tents erected over the springs, or baths, of mineral waters; the effects of which, outward and inward, are celebrated among medical men of the Regno di Napoli. (A Treatise on these waters, and on those of Cutilia, has been written by Dr. Luigi Petrini, of Aquila.) "*I bagnanti*" were constantly coming out of and going into these tents, and the whole was a very gay scene.

All the triple-armed valley of Antrodoco is full of grand scenery; but it is so threatened and walled-in by lofty mountains, as to be, to my feeling, oppressive in character. The town itself has a very Swiss look; or rather resembles one at the foot of the Alps, on the Italian side. It contains no object of interest, and is sufficiently gloomy when "*i bagnanti*" are all gone: its Castle, now a ruin, frowns in decay, from a huge rock immediately above the clustered dwellings. (See PLATE XIV.) The costume of the women is a long shawl of dark-blue cloth, worn over all the rest of their dress; and is rather pretty than otherwise, as they always contrive to wear it gracefully.

In the forenoon, Prince Giardinelli accompanied us on our road to Civita Ducale, the frontier-town of the *Regno*, and *Capo-luogo* of the district, to the Sottintendente of which he had kindly provided us with letters. Our route, the high-road from Aquila to Rome, passed the many torrent-beds and streams rushing to the Velino, and following the course of the river to Borghetto, a little town two miles from Antrodoco, there crossed it by an ancient Roman bridge, the Ponte Sta Margherita. The valley is very beautiful; and several little villages, perched among the heights on either side, give it a cheerful appearance; while the borders of the Velino are abundantly cultivated with vine and orchard-trees, this district being celebrated for fruit. We had not, however, great time for observation, as our horses had been sent on before; and we were whirled along with a Jehu-like rapidity in a light carriage, the Governor driving us, and another with his suite following.

The valley of the Velino is much wider beyond the little town of Paterno, (believed to be the ancient Cutilia,) and the flat waste near the river is full of the most curious mineral springs, forming numerous little lakes. Some are hot, some cold, some sulphureous, some charged with iron, &c.; and I cannot say but that I wished them all anywhere else, as we were presented with several glasses of their contents, only varying in degrees of nastiness. When this impromptu refreshment was over, we took leave of our host, who returned to Antrodoco, while we rode on slowly to Civita Ducale.

This town was fortified, if not erected, by Charles II. of Anjou, about 1309;[a] and seems to have arisen from the remains of adjacent Sabine towns,

[a] Pachichelli, vol. iii. p. 52, and Guattani, ii. 275.

Lista, Cutilia, &c. Sieges and earthquakes have done their work of destruction on this outwork of the Neapolitan kingdom; and, at present, anything more mournful than the state of this *Capo di Distretto* cannot well be conceived, either as to its walls, or its internal habitations. The entrance to the town is, however, very picturesque indeed: an extremely high tower guards the gate; while, beyond the ruined fortifications, the blue Velino is seen winding to the hills, which close in the vale of Terni. The Piazza of Civita Ducale also had great attractions: its irregular buildings, and some Gothic



PIAZZA OF CIVITA DUCALE

windows, are worth attention. One of its sides is partly formed by a very extensive Palazzo, once a convent, but now the Sottintendenza, or Sub-Governor's official residence, the only edifice in Civita Ducale at all inviting in appearance. Its interior was spacious in the extreme; and, having presented our letters, we were received most graciously by Don Francesco Console, the Sottintendente, in an endless suite of lofty rooms, containing royal arms, and royal busts, and royal portraits in profusion.

The repast which followed, though a very good dinner, was rather wearisome, owing to our host being very full of elaborate compliments, which our English wits could not fully appreciate: we were very well pleased nevertheless, for our good-natured entertainer did his best, according to his country's fashion; and what more could any one expect?

We started from Civita Ducale towards evening; and betwixt that town and Rieti, a distance of about six miles, we passed the boundary of the kingdom of Naples, and again entered the Roman territory. And we were sorry to do so, for at Rieti we were to separate (K. to return to Frascati,—

I to some hard work in sketching over the whole ground we had just visited); and as our ten days' excursion had been in every way thoroughly delightful and successful, we could not but regret that it was so near its conclusion.

It was dark when we reached Rieti, after a pleasant ride by the woody vale of the Velino, and we found a home at the Locanda, "*La Posta.*"

August 7–10, 1843. We were not, however, to separate so soon as we had imagined. We were wandering (rather later in the day than was prudent) over a villa of Marchese Potenziani, (to whom Prince Canino had kindly given us letters, and who has great possessions around Rieti,) when K. was struck by a *coup de soleil*, from the effects of which he suffered much for some time. Happily, the inn at Rieti possessed tolerable comforts; and several families of the town, to whom we had introductions, were exceedingly obliging. Among these, Cav. D. Angelo. M. Ricci claims a particular notice for his kind courtesies; formerly preceptor to the children of Joachim Murat, and well known in Italy as a poet and literary man, he now resides almost entirely in Rieti, where he has one of the finest palaces, containing some of Canova's works, and a highly valuable collection of paintings. Our thanks were also due to the families Potenziani, Vecchiarelli, and Blasetti, and to a very obliging Signor Filippo Carocci, all of whom offered us assistance or attentions.

Rieti, the ancient Reate,[a] a city of the Sabines, of great antiquity, and now the seat of government of one of the *Delegazioni*, into which the Roman States are divided, stands on the Velino,[b] at one extremity of a wide and fertile plain, the beauty of which can be but little appreciated by a hasty visitor. From various villas, or vineyards, situated on the sides of the wooded hills which entirely surround the plain, magnificent views of the city may be obtained. That from the Villa Pomane (see PLATE XV.) is, perhaps, the finest; though the Villa Potenziani commands a more extensive prospect. I thought

[a] Cramer, Anc. It. i. 314.

[b] An old chronicle existing in the Vatican, and quoted by Guattani (v. ii. 276), mentions a siege of Rieti by Frederic II. in 1241, and that Charles II. of Anjou was crowned there in 1288. The Velino and Turano frequently overflow after sudden rains, and these inundations cause great damage to Rieti and its surrounding territory.

I had scarcely ever beheld any lovelier scene than the towers of Rieti and its quiet world of vineyard, as I saw it the last evening of my stay. The Marchesa Vecchiarelli had given a little entertainment on the Cypress Terrace, beyond the Casino; and as we sat at supper by the brilliant light of the full moon, slanting between the trunks of the aged trees, the city at our feet, and the majestic mountain of Leonessa forming the most glorious back-ground possible, imagination could hardly have pictured a more perfect scene of Italian *villeggiatura*.

At length K. was sufficiently restored to undertake a night journey by the mountains to Tivoli, and thence to Frascati, where some of his family were staying: accordingly, hiring a man to ride old Gridiron (with whom I was sorry to part) to Rome, he left me on the evening of the 10th.

Meanwhile, having found my luggage and drawing materials awaiting me at Rieti, I prepared to start afresh on the following morning. And so ended our first Abruzzo excursion.



E. Lear del et lith

ILLUSTRATED EXCURSIONS

IN

ITALY.

No. II.

IN THE KINGDOM OF NAPLES, 1843.

AUGUST 11th, 1843. HAVING no longer a companion to share the ups and downs of a rambling life, I could not look forward to my second series of explorings with great pleasure. To be sure, it is better to be alone than in company with a grumbler, or a caviller about farthings, or one who is upset by little difficulties, or—what is worse, perhaps, than all—one who regards all things with total apathy; but as my late co-mate had none of these ill conditions, and was moreover, of an imperturbably good temper, and fully capable of enjoying every variety of wandering, come in what shape it might, I confess to having been somewhat dreary at first starting. However,—*non v'era rimedio*,—and it was necessary to make sketches.

The good-natured Signor Filippo Carocci drove me very early to Civita Ducale,—and so far, the pleasant valley of the Velino and its wooded hills were cheerful enough: not so the mournful pseudo-convent we had dined in a week ago, whose cloisters and corridors, with the royal arms in every possible corner, seemed more deadly dull than ever. Dulness and Civita Ducale are, indeed, synonymous.

Until dinner, having amused myself by sketching the Piazza before the shadows had all changed, I explored the place; though I found little to draw,

either at a thriving convent on a hill above the town, or about the old walls, crumbling among broken rocks well mantled by the luxuriant wild-fig. The natural politeness of the Abruzzesi gave me one or two traits to muse on: a peasant standing for a quarter of an hour on the rocks, to see that I did not miss my way to the river, continued to call out, and make signs as to the short cuts with laudable anxiety; and near the stream, all gay with many-coloured washerwomen, a polite swineherd chastised one of his pigs for conveying his mud-covered body too near my steps. "*Volete buttarvi in faccia al Signore?*"—quoth he, as he enforced his remonstrances with a resounding thump.

The worst of taking up one's abode in these Government places, however desirable in other respects, is the uncertainty of the official hours of eating. It was two o'clock ere dinner was announced, and that is long to wait, from four A.M., on a mere cup of coffee. In the meantime the Sub-Governor's servant was highly anxious to shave me and cut my hair, which operations he impressively assured me would be so well performed that I should ever more bitterly repent the neglecting his offer,—"*E poi in questi Abruzzi, non ci sarà mai meglior' occasione.*" Don Francesco Console, the Sottintendente, is an amiable and gentlemanlike man in his way, though our *tête-à-tête* repast was not over-brilliant, from the lack of any common ground for conversation; nor, perhaps, did the fact of the dinner consisting wholly and solely of eggs add to the liveliness of the discourse, which, by-the-bye, was chiefly about the Thames Tunnel—an object of immense interest to foreigners, but which I had never seen, and should have been little able to describe if I had.

I drew again till evening, and then waited for Don Francesco, who had gone to Antrodoco, until I was heartily tired of pacing those silent corridors, whose stillness was only broken by the stealthy steps of clandestine cats. Thought I, —two months of the Abruzzi after this fashion will be more than enough.— My host, on his arrival, reported that Prince Giardinelli would come here on the 13th, on his way (by Rome) to an immense *festa*, which takes place at Tagliacozzo once in a century.

Eggs again for supper!

August 12th, 1843. Having drawn the tall tower at the gate of Civita Ducale, I left the town, after another egg-dinner (for the Abruzzesi keep the

fast of Saturday as strictly as that of Friday), and proceeded towards evening through the vale of Cutilia, whose windings abound with quiet grandeur.

On arriving at Antrodoco, already gloomy in the shade of its high mountains, I found all bustle and preparation in the little house where the Intendente had fixed his summer residence, and where we had been so well entertained on the 5th. He was just starting for Cività Ducale, with his little daughter Donna Caterina,—her eyes sparkling with the idea of seeing Rome. Previously to his departure, however, he very good-naturedly assigned me a lodging, and particularly invited me to be present at the *centesimo*, or *fête* of Tagliacozzo, on the 19th.

After having hunted out my luggage, well-nigh lost in the confusion attending the migration of the Intendente and his suite, and having arranged with a Don somebody Todeschini to take a room in his house, (a rambling place, full of break-neck stairs and abrupt corners, let out to the "*varj' Bagnanti,*") I adjourned to supper in my host's house—a sort of *pension*, where was a great mingling of odd people. The only way to be comfortable was to adapt oneself to circumstances, so I did as everybody else did after supper—namely, sang songs and played on the guitar perpetually, and was consequently pestered for "*un' aria Inglese*" every five minutes afterwards during my stay. Two widows from Aquila were incessant in their requests for "Ye banks and braes;" but "Alice Gray" had the greatest number of votes. Thus the evening went by merrily enough; and if there was not too much refinement in the society, at least good-nature and high spirits were not wanting.

August 13th, 1843. The cool valley of Antrodoco is in deep shade till late in the morning. I was sauntering by the brawling river, when a little boy passed me carrying a dead fox. "It is delightful food, (*cibo squisito,*)" said he, "either boiled or roast;"—said I, "I wish you joy." The odd parties rushing about to and from the *Bagni* diverted me extremely. The Baron Caccianini, Segretario-Generale of the province, and acting as Vice-Intendente during the Prince's absence, sent to ask me to dine at one o'clock—an invitation I was glad to accept; and I excused myself to the amiable *Bagnanti* of yesterday evening, whom I joined in an odd luncheon of beans and wine, to

make amends for leaving them at dinner. Our party at the Baron's consisted only of himself, the Giudice, and his Secretary, — an agreeable, well-bred set of persons, though not over well informed about Europe generally, or England especially, except the Thames Tunnel.—"*Siete Cristiani da voi?*" said the Baron's Secretary. "*Si, Signore,*" said I. "*Mi piace davvero,*" was the reply; "*aveva un non so che d'idea che vi ci fossero de' Protestanti.*" "*Quanto sei sciocco!*" said the Baron.—Supper with the *Bagnanti*, at D. B. Todeschini's: a light-hearted, simple set of people.

August 14th-15th. These two days I spent in sketching the town, and the pass up to the picturesque Madonna delle Grotte. The only chance for drawing is by rising before the sun, and making use of every moment of time until the heat (which in this valley is very great) obliges one to return to shelter. After the mid-day meal, which was a cheerful one enough, at the Casa Todeschini, sleep and music divided the hours until it was time to recommence drawing. The stillness of an Italian town during this period of the day is striking. Three or four children are playing with a tame sheep under my window, making a hundred pretty groups and pictures; the two widows are humming faintly to the guitar; all the rest of Antrodoco seems fast asleep.

The magnificence of the pass just above the town towards evening is extreme: except in the creations of Titian or Giorgione, one seldom sees such hues of purple and blue and gold as those with which those lofty hills are clothed with in an Italian sunset.

I decided to go with the Intendente's suite to-morrow to Tagliacozzo (though my first intention had been to return to Aquila), as I thought I might see more of the people by this arrangement. So I took leave of the Baron Caccianini, and, paying for my "*Bagnante*" lodging, retired to rest, being awoke every quarter of an hour afterwards for half the night by the question, "*Eccellenza, a che ora vuol alzarsi?*" from a boring old servant of the Segretario, whose obsequious attentions had been overpowering during my stay. "*Permettete!*" "*scusate!*" "*Eccellenza!*" were perpetually in his mouth; but he never did any earthly thing of service.

August 16th, 1843. An hour before daylight being the time named for our starting, we assembled in the market-place, although two hours after the sun was fully risen we were still unprepared to set off. Great was the tumult in the narrow street where the Intendente had lodged: the arrangement of his luggage—the soothing and menacing of eccentric mules and perverse horses—the collecting together all his Excellency's suite of domestics—the simultaneous drinking of coffee at the last moment—and the noisy adieux of the Antrodochesi spectators. How many saddles were found to be inverted, just as they should have been on their bearers' backs! How much string was required to tie on irregular articles of baggage! And how many times all the horses, mules, asses, luggage, grooms, guides, and spectators were involved in the wildest confusion, by some sudden freak of one or two ungovernable quadrupeds! These are matters only to be guessed at by those who have sojourned in Italy.

At length we were in order: the Secretary and the Judge on very forlorn-looking mules; the cook and all the male household, with most elaborate accompaniments of food and utensils, on creatures of every description; and the *Maestro di Cavalleria*, with a mounted groom leading Prince Giardinelli's gray horse, and two others on little animals as ugly as vicious, (with no tails, and eyes a long way out of their heads,) dignified by the title of Pomeranian ponies, and intended for the use of Donna Caterina. As for me, I had a very decent black horse, with a most uneasy saddle, the stirrups appertaining to which gave way in about a quarter of an hour, and rolled hopelessly down the ravine. Behind came the *gend'armes*, with guides and baggage-mules; and a highly-picturesque cavalcade we were, however our appointments might want the full dignity to be looked for in a Governor's establishment.

Slowly we wound up the pass as far as Rocca di Corno, where we halted for about an hour (though to what purpose I have not the faintest idea); and then, having proceeded two or three miles further on the Aquila road, we struck into a mule-track leading to the right. For the last part of our route we had varied the sleepy monotony of our progress by a trot or canter along the good highway; but, as we began to ascend a wild and steep mountain, we gradually resumed our sedate single line, except the wretched little Pome-

ranians, who were particularly alert in climbing up the rocky paths, and aimed kicks profusely at everybody they passed. It occupied a weary while in the glaring heat of the day to conquer this mountain; and when we did so (except a short glimpse of the wall-like range of the Gran Sasso), there was nothing to repay us for our trouble: a long and tiresome plain of undulating ground, with no one spot prettier or more remarkable than another. At noon we halted for repose and repast in a ruined *tenuta*, or cattle-shed.

There is always much fun in the wild roughing character of this kind of expedition; and the excellent cold mutton, bread, and onions, were by no means the worse for being eaten off the top of a barrel, our seats being the trunk of a tree. Our wine, alas! was that wretched *vino cotto*—equally unpalatable and unwholesome; for, little as I drank of it, there being no water, I paid a dear penalty in the shape of a headache. In the afternoon we again set off, most of the party complaining bitterly of fatigue, and not the least sympathising with my admiration of the beauty of the views, which, as we descended, opened into yellow plains fringed with fine oak-woods, stretching away on all sides at the foot of the magnificent Marsic mountains, for we had now entered the old territory of the Marsi.

Our road wound through one of these forests, and below the picturesque town of Corbara del Conte; whence, leaving on our right the distant Turano, whose towers were glowing in the setting sun, we made for Sant' Anatolia, a neat-looking little village, where we were to pass the night. All this part of the Abruzzi abounds with very ancient remains,[a] and the sites of several cities of the Aborigines of Italy are fixed by antiquaries in these valleys. Martelli's History of the Sicoli also gives much information on the subject, if one dare to sift it from his two volumes of laborious trifling.[b]

Part of our company, myself among them, rode on to proclaim our arrival, and bestir our unexpecting hosts in our favour; but as all the Dons and Donnas Placidi (the principal people of the place) were out walking, we got nothing by our move, and had to wait in the street for a considerable time.

[a] See Keppel Craven's Tour; Cramer, Anc. It. i. 317, &c.

[b] The most complete account of this valley may be gathered from the Chevalier Bunsen's treatise: "Esame Corografico e storico del sito dei più antichi stabilmenti Italici nel Territorio Reatino e le sue adjacenza," in the volume of 1837 of the "Annali dell' Instituto di Corrispondenza Archælogica. Paris."

As for me, I fell into a comfortable sleep; and when I awoke, the rest of our cavalcade had arrived in a state of great fatigue, and were employed in drinking cold water with spirit of aniseed, administered to them by a variety of hospitable old women without shoes or stockings.

Soon after the Placidi family appeared—a very striking groupe, composed of a most venerable old lady, 98 years of age, whose long white hair fell on her shoulders, and two sons, both upwards of 70, and in appearance as old as their mother, who called them "*fanciulli miei*" and "*figliuolini*." By these good people we were taken to the Palazzo Placidi—a huge, rambling old house, with gloomy, dirty state-rooms, full of ancient furniture arranged round the walls, damask sofas and leather chairs, and tables with gilded legs, none of them apparently having been in use since the days of the early Sicoli Kings, of whose names D. F. Martelli obligingly gives a list from Shem downwards. The emptiness of rooms in these Palazzi, the absence of books, needle-work, or any of the little signs of mental occupation so constant in our own homes, is always observable, and to an English feeling gives an air of chill and discomfort far from agreeable.

Nothing could be more hospitable or well supplied than the supper-table, which we were glad to join. Donna Serafina de' Placidi was a wondrous old lady, in full possession of all her faculties, and conversing while she knitted with great assiduity. A chaotic-looking chamber was shown me as mine for the night, containing a vast bed, with crimson velvet about it enough for three such; on which I was glad to repose in my cloak, seeing that its comfort and propriety were wholly external.

August 17th, 1843. We were roused long before day, and sent on our way coffeeless,—an unusual circumstance in Italy, where, though nobody eats until later in the day, the morning "*tazza di cafè*" is seldom omitted. Having visited the chapel of Sant' Anatolia, our cavalcade wound through cool and pleasant woods for an hour or two; and after passing through the town of San Donato, we descended to Tagliacozzo. Very little *allegria* prevailed in our party, and the general horror lest their steeds should break into the smallest trot showed that some inconvenience was the result of the previous day's

exertion. "*Piano—per carità!*"—"*Non trottate per l'amor del cielo!*"—"*Sono amazzato!*"—"*O che fossi arrivato!*" were heard from various mouths in as many accents of pain and anxiety.

We entered Tagliacozzo from below (see PLATE II.), and found a great change in its appearance from that which it bore at my visit in July. The green before the town was covered with people preparing for the fair held there, and the houses were all more or less decorated in honour of this great festa of the Madonna, (called la Madonna dell' Oriente, from a picture of the Virgin, supposed to be of Eastern workmanship,) which is held but once in a century, and consequently with great pomp and expenditure. All round the Piazza a temporary colonnade had been built; and in the centre a very pretty Gothic chapel of ornamented wood, in which the painting of the Madonna was placed, no church in Tagliacozzo being of sufficient size to accommodate the multitude expected. In this chapel the Bishop of Solmona (the Bishop of the Marsi, in whose diocese Tagliacozzo is situated, being absent,) was to officiate at High Mass. On all sides were fixed poles and all sorts of ironworks for illuminations, and the very fountain was dried and turned into a depôt for fireworks, while the crowds of people arriving at every instant betokened how well the fête would be attended.

We went immediately to the Palazzo Mastroddi, a fine house, built by the grandfather of the present proprietor;—a noble staircase, ornamented with antique fragments, inscriptions, and busts of remarkable men of the district, leads to an excellent suite of rooms, perfectly clean, well kept, though thinly furnished, the largest of which contained a good piano-forte. Most of these rooms communicated with an extensive covered Loggia, built over the roofs of the adjacent houses, and looking into the Piazza, whose gay white buildings, hung with red and blue tapestry, and backed by the high rocks of the pass and the deep blue sky, formed a charming scene. Choruses of sacred music were resounding through all these brilliant apartments, *Canonici* and amateur choristers rehearsing for to-morrow's display, as we met Don Filippo Mastroddi, the wealthy master of the mansion—a most agreeable and gentlemanlike person, who welcomed me very cordially, and showed me to a quiet little bed-room, whose snugness and perfect nicety contrasted favourably with the unclean magnificence of my last night's abode.

About two we dined—a party of sixteen or eighteen, the ladies and sisters of the two hosts being present, for there are two brothers Mastroddi; and, as is frequently the case in the provinces, their families live united in the same family mansion. But there is seldom any presentation to the fair part of the household; and the secondary position in society, held by those who are with us of the first importance, is a striking, and not over-agreeable, feature in the domestic economy in many of these country establishments.

After dinner, Don Filippo shewed me some good specimens of Gothic windows in different parts of the town. We also went over an institution for the education of young ladies of the first families of the Marsica; it was founded by the Mastroddi family, and is under the immediate management of three Sisters of Charity. The pupils are lodged in the old Ducal Palazzo, a heavy but picturesque building, containing nothing very remarkable, though some frescoes in a Loggia are pointed out as being so.

Don Filippo was received with the greatest possible respect by the mistresses, and saluted with "*singolarissimo mio padrone, respettabilissimo, educatissimo, garbatissimo, e nobilissimo,*" in the most profuse manner.

After drawing the view of the castle and hills from above the town, (see PLATE I.), I returned to the family supper-party; and the evening concluded by our all adjourning to the theatre, a pretty and well-ordered little building, where *Il Giuramento* was not badly performed.

August 18th, 1843. During to-day, the eve of the fête, a great concourse of people poured into the town from all sides; and the excitement prevailing in the Piazza Mastroddi grew hourly greater from the announcement of fresh arrivals, and the expectation of others, especially that of the Prince Intendente. Among the guests, the family of the Baron Coletti appeared to me one of the most polished and amiable, though infinite good-humour lighted up the faces of everybody. At length, late after sun-set, drums, flambeaux, and bustle, announced the Governor's entrance; and, all the principal persons having assembled in the large room to pay their respects to him, there was no lack of brilliancy—the ladies sparkling in all the jewels they possessed; and the supper was served in a style of substantial splendour I had no expectation of seeing in the Abruzzi.

August 19, 20, 21, 1843. To those who have no idea of an Italian fête, a description of that I witnessed here may be amusing; and the details of one will suffice for the whole three days of its duration. Suppose yourself, therefore, in the Casa Mastroddi at sun-rise; a cup of coffee is brought to you in your own room, (a biscuit also if you ask for it, though the natives do not indulge in anything so like a breakfast,) or you go to seek your *café* in the room of Donna Caterina, the stepmother of the two brothers Mastroddi, who continually labours to fill little cups, which are dispersed by her domestics all over the mansion. Then you wander into the large room, and into the great Loggia, where you find the ladies and officers walking about in parties, or listening to the bands of music incessantly performing below the window. The Piazza is like a scene in a theatre, all hung with crimson and gold draperies and tapestry from window and door, and crowded with people, the constant hum of the multitude filling up the pauses between the music. About eleven, a stir takes place among the magnates of the house: everybody comes forth full-dressed, and the Intendente, (with his staff, in full uniform,) and all the company following, walk through lines of military to the temporary chapel, where the Bishop of Solmona officiates at High Mass. A friar having preached a Latin sermon of most painful duration, the Prince and the Mastroddi party return to the palace in the same order and state; the gay colours, and the brilliant light of summer over the whole procession making it a very sparkling scene. Nor should I omit, that the dress of a Neapolitan Bishop (a bright-green satin hat, amethyst-coloured silk robes lined with scarlet, gold chain and cross, with lilac stockings,) is in itself a world of glitter. Then, between the "*fonzioni*" and "*pranzo,*" we all went,—one day, to make a call of ceremony on some grandees of the town;—or, on another, we attended the Bishop and the Prince to the foundation school, where we earnestly inspected samplers and artificial flowers, made by the prettiest set of little girls possible, the Bishop noticing all with a kindness of manner that shewed the old gentleman's heart was full of good feelings. In all these visitings, as we passed along the streets, the military saluted the Prince; and the people kneeled, without intermission, for the Bishop's benediction.

To one whose greatest horror is noise, this sort of life was not a little wearying; but having been informed that to leave the house during the festa would be considered as the greatest insult to the family, I felt obliged to remain, and resigned me to my *fête* accordingly.

Next came the dinner: the company in the Palazzo Mastroddi now amounted to above sixty persons, (not including servants,) and I confess to being somewhat amazed, much as I had heard of Abruzzo hospitality, at the scale on which these entertainments were conducted. A gay scene it was; and I always had the pleasure of getting a place by some one of the ladies of the company; a piece of good fortune I owed to my being the only foreigner present, for a dark mass of my superiors in rank — Generals, Judges, &c., were obliged to sit together, unilluminated by any of the lights of Creation.

Immediately after dinner, the suite of rooms and Loggia were thronged by conversing groups, and coffee was handed amongst them. A novel picture was that festive Piazza, alive with thousands of loiterers, (there were said to be more than ten thousand visitors at this fête, besides the townspeople,) listening to the Chieti and Tagliacozzo bands playing alternately.

By this time the sun was sinking, and everybody sallied forth to the promenade outside the town, where platforms were erected to observe the horse-races, which shortly took place, and about which great interest was shown. The winning horse was taken up to the chapel of the Madonna dell' Oriente, and led to the steps of the altar, by way, I suppose, of expressing that a spirit of thankfulness may be graceful and proper upon all occasions.

And after the race, a fire-balloon should have ascended; but somehow or other there was a reigning destiny adverse to balloons, for the first caught fire, and blazed away before it left earth; the second stuck in a tree, where it shared the same fate; and the largest ran erroneously among chimney-pots, and was consumed on the house-tops, to the great disgust of the Tagliacozzesi.

Now followed an invitation from Madame Mancini, or some one else who possessed a house in the Piazza, in order to see the girandola or fireworks; so away we went, (the Intendente leading the way,) and ate ices in the draped galleries overlooking the square. This was about *Ave Maria*, or later, and I

can never forget the scene it displayed; the dense crowd of people, some four or five thousand, were at once on their knees, and burst forth as if one voice were singing the evening chant to the Virgin, the echoes of which rang back from the black rocks of the Pass, with a solemnity of deep melody, the more soothingly beautiful after the past hours of hubbub.

Crack—bounce—whizz! the scene was changed in a twinkling by the flash and explosion of all kinds of fireworks; rockets flying hither and thither, serpents rushing and fizzing all round the colonnades, and that which should have been the fountain blazing away in streams of fire.

Again a movement, and the point of interest is changed: a long line of people is bending towards the theatre, and threading with difficulty the groups of peasants already composing themselves to sleep. As soon as our party arrived the performance began, and great fun we had between the acts of the Opera, in laughing at the strange dresses of some of the personages from neighbouring towns, who displayed fashions unchanged, said the Tagliacozzesi, since the last century's festa. One charming old lady, with a rose-coloured satin bonnet, at least four feet in diameter, and a blue and yellow fan to match, was the delight of the whole audience.

It was past midnight ere we returned, by bright moonlight, through the quiet Piazza, thronged with the same multitude of peasants, who had been unable to find shelter in the over-filled accommodation of the town *Locande* and *Osterie*, and now lay buried in sleep. Many of the groups of mothers and families, with the broken silver rays falling on them through the gothic arches of the little temple, were picturesque and touching beyond description.

To all these events add a very merry supper, and a late going to repose, and such was the routine of three days, the varieties of processions, visits to adjacent villas, &c., excepted. Annoyed, as I had been, at the prospect of such waste of time, I confess to having been pretty well reconciled to it by the kindness and amiable disposition of every one with whom I was brought in contact, and the unbroken cheerfulness with which every moment was filled up.

The concluding events of the last days of the fête must, however, yet be related; which, though only occasioning great confusion, might have had very sad results. During the last act of "*Il Barbiere*," a breathless individual rushed into the theatre, and yelled out the fatal word—"*Incendio!* ——"

Great was the confusion, and on gaining the narrow street, the scene was terrible: an immense body of flame was rising behind the old Ducal Palace, and dense volumes of smoke obscured the moon. The fire had not yet reached the building, but must inevitably do so unless speedily checked, as the offices of the Institution immediately communicated with an extensive magazine (or *fenile*) of straw, whose contents had been burning internally for some time before the flames burst forth, and led to the alarm being given.

To rescue the children was the first object, and great good feeling and promptitude were manifested on all sides. As soon as the terrified females—most of them carried straight from their beds to various adjacent houses, were out of danger, and the furniture moved to the street, every one did his best towards the extinction of the fire,—no easy matter, since no water was within reach; and the only method adopted was, to unroof that part of the *fenile*, nearest the Palazzo, and smother the flames as far as possible with continual baskets of earth, until the rooms joining the premises to the burning barn could be destroyed, to prevent the further spread of the conflagration. This was a long operation, though many men were immediately pressed into the service, and commenced the work of demolition with rapidity. Meanwhile we were all marshalled into companies, and set to work in a garden to fill tubs and baskets with earth, which were handed, when full, to the top of the wall of the unroofed *fenile*, where lines of men threw their contents out on the burning fuel.

The exact amount of good resulting to the common cause from my individual exertions was small: for having grubbed and clawed away at the ground till I had filled a very handsome tub, I turned round hastily to carry it to its destination,—but not being aware that the ladies' garden was formed terrace-wise, and being too blind to perceive it, I fell down a height of about six feet, into the centre of a bed of brocoli, where all my carefully-filled tub was *bouleversè* on to my own respectable person.

Happily, after the burning barn was isolated, by all communication between it and the surrounding buildings being destroyed, the danger to the town was diminished, though the showers of falling sparks throughout the night gave great cause for uneasiness. I could hardly help thinking, that the origin of all this might be sought for in the fireworks of the evening;

but I found that the Tagliacozzesi were rather scandalized at such an idea. And thus ended the great festa of Tagliaccozzo in 1843.

August 22nd, 1843. I took leave with regret of the kind Mastroddi family, all the members of which are most lively and amiable, and Don Filippo himself a person of cultivated mind and considerable attainments. Nor was I allowed to depart without great invitations to prolong my stay, for they informed me that for at least a week their most intimate friends would remain in the house, and the dancing and festivities of those days would be all the more desirable, as they would be less encumbered by state and ceremony. I regretted also the little chance I had of again meeting with the Coletti family, agreeable and well-informed people, although they also cordially invited me to their house at Tufo in the Marsica.

My next destination was to Magliano, to the house of Don Giambattista (or, called for shortness, Don Tita,) Masciarelli, one of the richest persons in the Abruzzi, to whom I had a letter of recommendation from M. le Chevalier Kestner.[a] Thither, accordingly, I went in his carriage, which had been sent to Tagliacozzo to bring back the youngest of his two sons, Don Gregorio, who had been present at the festa. Poor Don Gregorio Masciarelli is an intelligent young man, about twenty years of age, although so diminutive as to appear a boy of ten or twelve. Unable to move a step, having become lame from a fall during his infancy, he is always cheerful; and though outwardly deprived of pleasure, the balance of happiness may be in his favour in a capacity for self-improvement, and a variety of resources known to few of the more healthy: his days pass in reading, or quiet games, or in studying the flute, violin, and piano; and he is no contemptible performer in drawing. In the early mornings, or in the bright evenings of summer, he is seated on the bench before his wealthy father's Palazzo, conversing with the passing villagers: or he is carried hither and thither by an old domestic. Poor little fellow! with what glee he reverted to all the gaieties and fun of the past fête, and how he dwelt on all the best scraps of the Prima Donna's performances!

[a] The Hanoverian Minister in Rome. It would be difficult to mention the name of this excellent person without acknowledging the frequent kindnesses received from him during a long residence in the Roman States.



E Lear del et lith

We passed beneath Scurcola, as when K. and I were together; then, leaving the road to Avezzano, we soon arrived at Magliano, a most neat and thriving little town, containing fifteen hundred inhabitants,[a] placed on an isolated eminence below the towering Monte Velino, and commanding views over the whole of the Campi Valentini. (See PLATE XVI.) Every street in Magliano is clean, every house in good order and repair, while the piazza, one of whose sides is formed by the Masciarelli Palace, is the perfection of feudal propriety and quiet. I believe there is no authentic record of the existence of Magliano before A.D. 1350,[b] although it is said by some to occupy the site of an ancient town—Mallianum: possibly, it has originated like Massa, Capelle, and other neighbouring villages, in the dispersion of the population of Alba. Its walls and fortifications are owing to a Cardinal Colonna, during the wars of that family with the Orsini.

Don Tita Masciarelli, my new host, is one of the most important proprietors of the Marsica: the fertile estates of Paterno, on the banks of the Lake of Fucino,—the territory around Magliano and the valley nearly to Sant' Anatolia, are all possessed by him, or shared by his younger brother Don Vincenzo, who resides in a Casino nearer Monte Velino. Don Tita himself is the picture of plain but hearty friendliness and sincerity, and has a well cultivated mind. He goes but little from his estates, the care of which is his great hobby; and he feels a just pride in his model town of Magliano, of which he is as it were the little monarch. His Palace, as might be expected from its owner, is all neatness and arrangement, with a quiet air of solidity and somewhat of luxury throughout: witness the rooms I occupied during my stay,—the sitting apartment of which was thoroughly well furnished, and the carpetted bedroom, containing its four-post bed with chintz hangings, opening into a capital little dressing-room, full of all the usual requisites and comforts. I could have fancied myself in old England.

At dinner, Donna Pepina Masciarelli, the lady of the house, (all married as well as single women are called by their Christian names here,) a ladylike and good-looking person, joined our party; and their daughter Cecilia a pretty little creature of seven years old. The order of the repast, plate-service, &c., &c., were such as one might meet in the houses of substantial but unostentatious persons in our own country. These little details—trifling

[a] Giustin. [b] Ibid.

in themselves, may be excused as tending to give an idea of the state of civilization and advanced comfort in these remote parts, which are not in general believed to enjoy such advantages.

"*Si crede da loro che non si trovano fra noi altro che Briganti ed Orsi,*" was the frequent remark of Abruzzese proprietors to me; but, alas! for the hunter or writer of romance! Bears as well as Brigands have ceased to exist in these quiet districts.

I remained three days at Magliano, never annoyed in any instance by officious attentions, but treated with the most simple and cordial warmth of hospitality. One morning I employed in sketching (from the Piazza of Magliano) the view of Campi Valentini towards the mountains of the Liris, a beautiful prospect, and memorable from the battle fought near Alba, between Charles I. of Anjou, and Corradino. In fancy, I could picture the long lines of the women of Aquila, who at sunrise on the 28th August A.D., 1268,[a] were seen descending the hills to the camp of the French, bearing provisions on their heads.

Another morning I was lionized by my excellent host, over his farm near Sant' Anatolia, and could not but be struck by the extreme good management and flourishing condition of everything. I fear I fell in his esteem as he ascertained by numerous questions my profound ignorance of agricultural matters—threshing-machines, rates of labour, stock, cattle, &c.; but I did my best in admiring all I saw, which I believe would have been of the greatest interest to an English farmer.

Two afternoons I devoted to visiting Alba, the ancient Alba Fucinensis, which stands on a double hill, about two miles only from Magliano, though the walk thither across the plain, covered with stones, is as fatiguing as treble the distance on a decent road. The great heat prevented one from setting out early, and to return by *Ave Maria* allows so little time, that I could not, as I wished, obtain drawings of the old walls, (among the most remarkable in Italy,) but gave my short visits to the choice and execution of views which appeared to me most picturesquely characteristic of the general situation of the old city. (See PLATES XVII. and XVIII.)

This celebrated place, the stronghold where Syphax King of Numidia and

[a] Cirillo p. 9.





F.Lear del. et lith.

ALBE

other captive sovereigns were detained by the Romans, is now a melancholy little village, whose inhabitants do not exceed two or three hundred in number. Of the hills which it formerly covered in its days of splendour, one now contains the solitary church of San Pietro, a building of high interest to the antiquary and architect, and which has been fully described by Valery, K. Craven, &c. :—the adjacent eminence bears all which now represents Alba,—a sorry street of decayed houses. Below these are vast remains of the walls, formed of gigantic stones, the oldest but least changed records of its past greatness.[a]

Long after the fall of the Roman Empire, Alba Fucinensis appears to have been a strong fortress, and perhaps suffered comparatively little from the inroads of barbarians until the invasion of the Saracens in the ninth and tenth centuries. In 742 its territory was conquered by Trasmondo, Duke of Spoleto, and was afterwards divided between the monasteries of Farfa and Casauria.[b] In 1100, it was held out against Pope Pasquale II. and Roger II. of Sicily,[c] by the anti-pope Clement III., who was finally expelled, and retired to the mountains, where, says Corsignani,[d] he died of hunger. —"*co 'denti della disperazione lacerato e divorato.*" Until the sixteenth century, when Fra. L. Alberti speaks of Alba as "*luogo abbandonato e rovinato,*" it was possessed by the Orsini and Colonna. The total fall of Alba may, however, be placed to the account of Charles I. of Anjou, who destroyed the city, and punished the inhabitants severely for their adherence to Corradino.[e] Thenceforward, it has only existed as a shadow. To a landscape painter its truly majestic situation, backed by Monte Velino, is worth many visits; and on account of its ancient and more modern associations, it is one of the most interesting spots in the Abruzzi provinces.

During another afternoon I made an excursion over hot fields of Gran Turco, or Indian corn, to Scurcola, a town containing one thousand five hundred inhabitants, at whose summit stands a ruined castle of the Colonna, and the church of Santa Maria della Vittoria, the successor of the Celestine Monastery, founded by Charles I. of Anjou, after his victory in 1268. Here also one

[a] Promis Antichita di Alba. This work contains a complete account of the past and present state of Alba.

[b] Promis. Ant. Alba. [c] Antinori, ii. 61. [d] Cor. i. 153. [e] Antinori, ii. 147.

has a full view of the flat cultivated plain where the battle was fought. At the top of the town is a house of the Buontempi—one of the oldest families of these regions, some of whose members I had met at Tagliacozzo fêsta: they welcomed me with true Abruzzese warmth, and were very anxious that I should remain; but I had promised to return to Magliano, which, after my sketching, I did, accompanied for half the way by Don Cosimo Buontempi. A few crumbling walls alone remain of the monastery of Santa Maria della Vittoria: the frequent inundations of the lake, earthquakes, &c.,



MONASTERY OF SANTA MARIA DELLA VITTORIA.

caused the monks to abandon it in the Middle Ages, and all the magnificence with which it had been adorned by Charles the First, taken from the destroyed Alba, was doomed to a speedy oblivion.[a] Its celebrated image of the Madonna, executed in France by order of the victorious King, and enclosed in a wooden case, still exists in the church of Santa Maria in Scurcola, where it was shown to me. They told me that the gold *fleurs-de-lis* with which it is covered were the cause of its not having been plundered by some French soldiery at the end of the last century. The discovery of this image among the ruins of the monastery, dates, according to an old record in the Buontempi (and quoted by Corsignani)[b], about the year 1520, when, according to the legend, the Virgin appeared in a dream to a woman of Tagliacozzo, and described the spot where the lost relic would be found, which, when dug up, was equally claimed by the people of Scurcola as theirs, from its having been found in their territory, and by those of Tagliacozzo on the ground that had they not searched for it it would never have been found at all. To quiet their dissensions, the Bishop of the Marsi ordered the image and its case

[a] Cesare Storia di Manfredi, ii. 66.

[b] Cor. i. 335

to be placed separately on the backs of two young mules, which were to go where they pleased, and the spot of their halting to be the site of a new church. The mules went to San Donato, and other places, and also in the most tantalizing manner close to Tagliacozzo itself, when, suddenly changing their route, they rushed up to the top of Scurcola, and refused to move another step: whereon the present Santa Maria della Vittoria was erected.

August 26th, 27th, 1843.—This morning I took leave of my good friends the Masciarelli, and sorry I was so to do. I had not been at all prepared to find such plain excellent people, from whose lips I did not hear one compliment during my stay—a rare occurrence in Italy.

My next halt was Avezzano, where I remained two days, drawing the calm and beautiful lake of Fucino: no easy task, since I had to set out in the dark to reach my destination before sunrise; for unless I did so, the effect of light and shade on the mountain passed away too rapidly for me to secure it on paper. It was well, however, that there were out-of-door amusements, for I could find no other lodging than that we had gone to on our visit in July, and at present my being alone did not diminish the effect of the disagreeables we had formerly had to contend with.

August 28th, 29th, 1843. I decided on a short visit to Civita D'Antino and the valley of the Liris, and taking all I required in the ample pockets of a shooting-jacket and a large portfolio, I set off without any introductory letters, determined on trying my fortune for a night's lodging. By sunrise I had reached the town of Luco, (*see page* 21,) where some people who had heard of our visit to Trasacco insisted on my taking coffee with them. After this hospitable interlude, I began to scale the great wall of mountain which confines the Val di Roveto down to Balzorano and Sora; and this was no light undertaking towards nine o'clock on an August morning. At the commencement of the ascent I passed several peasants slowly toiling up the path, all of whom affectionately conjured me not to attempt to proceed, as the exploit was not fit for "*gente di città*." In spite, however, of their prophetic

warnings, I got to the summit, to their great amusement, before them all. With the marked friendliness of these people, they made me eat some pears and drink wine—luckily, not vino cotto; three of them also offered me clean shirts—"*é pericoloso lo stare sudato in cima di queste montagne alte.*" One cannot but be struck with these little incidents.

Far below my feet, though yet high above the valley of Roveto, through which the Liris glides, lay the town of Civita D'Antino; and a long descent through splendid forests of beech brought me to its level. A feeling of dreariness, of which I can give no idea, pervades the surrounding scenery.

Opposite were the savage crests of Serra di Sant Antonio, (whose deep recesses shelter a considerable waterfall,) and, as far as eye can reach, the Vale of the Liris is closed on each side by long lines of solemn mountains, of an indescribably stern and gloomy character, clad to their summits with thick forests, which, until within the last quarter of a century, bears were not uncommonly known to inhabit.

Civita D'Antino, a wild and scattered place, has a poetical and sullen grandeur in its aspect, as if it were altogether out of the world of life: no other dwellings are in sight, and its own bear the stamp of desolate and melancholy antiquity.

The present town, containing about twelve hundred inhabitants, occupies but a small portion of the extensive site of the ancient city, the capital of the Antinates,[a] the remains of which are here and there to be traced by fragments of cyclopean architecture.

This spot has been more frequently visited than most of the towns of this region, *vide* Sir R. C. Hoare,[b] K. Craven, &c.: and good accounts of it may be read in their works. (See PLATES XIX. and XX.)

I easily found the spacious palace of Don Antonio Ferrante, a wealthy man, and the great proprietor of the district. Don Antonio was absent; but although I had no introduction beyond a simple request for a night's shelter, I was as well received as if I had been travelling with a suite of domestics, and shewn to a handsome and clean room in the most friendly manner possible. And indeed, the comforts of the interior of Civita D'Antino are exceedingly striking, after the external appearance of the town:

[a] Cramer, i. 330.

[b] Sir R. C. Hoare's Classical Tour, i. 339.





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old and modern pictures in profusion, looking-glasses, china, bedeck the walls, and the number of rooms is bewildering; one suite where the present King Ferdinand has sojourned during some of his progresses is comparatively splendid.

And in like taste and order was the repast this friendly family prepared for me, (their own dinner-hour being over,) all things much as you might find them at any country gentleman's in our own country. A white wine of the district was highly commendable; and the lamb-cutlets might have done credit to South Down or North Wales hospitality. The representative of my absent host, a merry little physician of Sora, apologized that Don Antonio Ferrante's second son, Manfredi, was unwell, and unable to have the pleasure of receiving me: the Doctor also assured me, that I lost much in not having met with Don Antonio himself, who, he repeatedly declared, was "*un vero fulmine*," though in what respect his learned friend (for Don Antonio had once been an Advocate) resembled a thunderbolt, he did not precisely say.

After dinner and a siestá, il Dottore shewed me a most delightful garden, attached to the house, and commanding the whole of the vast Swiss-looking valley of Roveto. Nothing could be more unexpected or charming than this well-kept villa, in so wild a spot; and I could easily believe, that for months, nay years, the family do not go beyond their own grounds. In truth, the toil of ascent to these eyrie homes must make it infinitely desirable that they should contain all things to satisfy the wants of their owners. A nook in the garden contained a solitary wild boar, lately taken in the woods near the house, who seemed no wise reconciled to the garden luxuries of his new home.

I was anxious to obtain a faithful representation of Civita D'Antino, but was scarcely able to do so, when a terrific thunder-storm, whose warning clouds had clothed the scene with inconceivable grandeur, drove me to the Palazzo Ferrante, where, till evening, I was amused by the good performance on the piano-forte of Don Manfredi Ferrante, whom I found on my return to the house. At supper, our party was further increased by Donna Maria Ferrante, and one daughter, who, though far from being so handsome as her sister Donna Costanza Coletti, was yet extremely pretty. The mistress of the mansion was still as remarkable for the beauty of her

face as for her agreeable manners. The lady-like quiet self-possession and simple friendliness of these Abruzzese females, of the higher orders, much delighted me, and I fancied I saw the *fac similes* of the dames of our own country, in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.

August 29th, 1843. I passed the morning in drawing, though the magnitude of the mountain lines prevents Civita d'Antino from being easily transferred to paper; and some time was devoted to the ancient Cyclopean remains round the town. After our noon-day dinner I set off, (though much entreated to stay by these good people,) Don Manfredi accompanying me for two or three miles. A curious change of life had occurred to this young man: he had been educated at Naples, and was well accustomed to the gaieties of the metropolis: a short time since he had been called from (what was in his case) the livelier position of a younger son to fulfil graver duties, as representative of his father, his elder brother having suddenly renounced all claim to his family property by becoming a Jesuit. I could not help thinking, from the remarks of Don Manfredi, that this prospect of riches and dignity seemed a poor compensation for loss of liberty; for the Abruzzese proprietor seldom quits his paternal estate: "*Siamo come i lupi, chiusi in queste montagne;*"—said he, "*non vado più in città.*"

I wandered down to the river Liris, through a beautiful oak wood; dwelling much on the memory of such frequent hospitalities; such warm-hearted people; such primitive mountain homes.

Below Civitella di Roveto, (from which the valley is named,) I crossed to the right bank of the clear stream, and followed its course to the little village of Santa Croce, whence I toiled up a thickly-wooded hill of chesnuts to Canistro, a small neat town very high up on the mountains, my intention being to remain there until morning, as a married daughter of Baron Coletti resided there, and I partly hoped to have fallen in with some of my Tagliacozzo friends, who had been to her house on a visit. But on arriving there, I found my friends had departed that morning, so I hurried down again, and went on to Pesco Canale and Capistrello, reaching Avezzano (by very hard walking,) at one hour of the night.

August 30, 1843. I could not resolve on leaving the neighbourhood of Capistrello without a sketch of its picturesque situation, so I returned thither and drew, at early morn, though the walk back at noon over the Campi Valentini, a perfectly unsheltered plain, was rather a severe undertaking. Indeed I was well nigh knocked up by heat and thirst, and anxiously asked every peasant I met coming from the market of Avezzano, if they were carrying fruit or liquid of any sort: *of course* they had nothing but onions, *pommi d'oro*, eggs, or lambswool stockings. To my great joy, the last turn of the winding road over the mountain above the Emissario, divulged a dear old woman carrying a huge water-melon, half of which she sold me for the sum of one grain, (less than a farthing,) and very refreshing it was. I regret not having seen or drawn the opening of the Emissario at Capistrello, which I believe is very picturesque.

From Avezzano that afternoon, I hied me on foot to Celano, a place I longed much to examine; and the Sottintendente of the Distretto, Don Romeo Indelicato (as odd a name as any one may discover,) had obligingly furnished me with a letter to one of the principal families of the town, the Tabassi.[a]

I have already said so much of Celano, that little remains but to give some account of my new hosts and their family. The Tabassi are of Solmona origin, and they are spoken of in old books[b] as among the most ancient of that city. Their possessions are scattered over the Abruzzi: the eldest brother, Baron Tabassi, resides at Chieti; Stefano inhabits Pescina; Francesco has a fine house at Solmona; and Pamfilo lives in Celano with two unmarried sisters; a third is a nun.

I passed four days at Celano, Don Francesco and Don Pamfilo, Donna Costanza and Donna Felicetta, being then the occupants of the family house. These good people sought every opportunity to oblige and assist me; but left me to do just as I pleased with regard to my out-of-doors occupation. In

[a] I usually conveyed my luggage, consisting of two large carpet-bags, on a mule or ass, whose driver served as guide; and six carlines was the ordinary sum paid for a day's march, with something over and above for *buona mano*. But as my walks were frequently from twenty-five to thirty miles, I had of course to pay in proportion.

[b] Pachichelli, iii. 19.

the evening, a few of the townspeople usually came in, and they delighted in looking over my sketches and recognizing each other's houses, &c. That which gained me more praise than any, was the view of St. Maria di Luco, (see PLATE 5,) where I had drawn a rope, attached to the bell of the campanile, the end of which entered the open widow of an adjacent house. This, it seems, was a plan of an old sexton, who preferred ringing the bell while he lay in bed to rising an hour earlier; and the shouts of laughter the "*Campana dell' Ozioso,*" used to provoke, were wonderful.

We had seated ourselves to supper the first evening of my arrival, when I felt myself suddenly shaken forward in my chair, till my nose nearly touched the table: some novel domestic arrangement of a servant behind, shaking everybody into his seat—said I to myself: — but the moment after all the family rose, and various people, screaming "*Terramoto!*" ran wildly into the room. Celano, and indeed the whole province of Abruzzo Ulteriore Secondo is very subject to earthquakes, and during my stay in the neighbourhood there were four shocks, which I soon learned to recognise as such.

The Tabassi family lived in a plain substantial manner, with no display. The rooms of their palazzo were comfortable for an Italian residence; though an English eye almost regrets the want of curtains, carpets, and crowded furniture, even where the heat of the climate render such luxuries objectionable.

August 31st, 1843. Drew above the town, and in the meadows below, whence the stupendous rock behind it is seen to great advantage. Two peasants came out of their field to offer me some almonds. Don Pamfilo took me over the interior of the Castle, a noble building: its carved doorways and windows, cortile, chapel, all in a solid style of Baronial splendour, but neglected and decaying. We also saw a convent below the town, which contains a good picture,—"*si dice la magnificenza di Giulio Romano,*" said an old monk who shewed it. At twelve,—having risen at four,—the good soup, fresh whitings, boiled capon, slices of cold ham and Bologna sausage, heaps of Macaroni, stewed veal, roast pigeon, pears, plums, and melons, were very acceptable; and such was the quality of their usual meals.

Sleep—drawing till dark—society—and supper.

September, 1st, 2nd, and 3rd. Various excursions occupied my time when not employed in drawing the town. One afternoon I followed the wild and dreary road to Aquila as far as San Potito: nothing can be much more savage and barren than this part of the vicinity of Celano; and I was sorry I had not time to reach Ovindole, a town on a precipitous rock in the distance, which appeared highly picturesque. I returned by Sant' Iona, a bleak-looking village, with no particular interest.

Another morning I allotted to the Bocca di Castelluccio, a narrow and formidable pass behind the mountain, at whose foot Celano stands. The entrance to this lonely ravine, ever unvisited by the sun, is between terrific rocks, which in parts of the pass are so close together as barely to admit the passage of a loaded mule. Throughout the winter, torrents, or snow, prevent any communication by this untoward road; but during summer it is visited by a few poor people, who gather the wood left in it by the winter's ravages. "*Che fai solo solo solo in queste aspre montagne?*" said an old creature laden with sticks, in amazement at my unknown employment. "*Statevi buono—ma, che cosa fai?*" said one or two woodmen. "*Badate vi del caldo quando uscite,*" said others with a good-natured consideration. After these rare interruptions, the scream, or rushing flight of a hawk, or the fall of a stone from the lofty sides of this mountain *foce*, as these chasms are called, were the only sounds that broke its deadly stillness, and I was glad to return to the "*caldo,*" and the merry family at Celano.

On fast days these good but homely people were sadly distressed at my having no meat, though I assured them I did not care about it; which was not strictly true, for I hate crabs, bream, barbel, and frogs. And then the novelty of pear-soup, and the potatoes, which were dressed in fifty fashions! —"*E vero che campono loro di Patate?*"—"*Buono lei pel addatarsene.*"—I shall always remember each division of the twenty-four hours as passed at Celano with peculiar pleasure; the mornings in the fresh meadows at the foot of the town, straying among the tall poplars wreathed with vines, till the sun came over the vast crag, and forced one to retreat to cooler haunts; the cloudless mid-day when all was still; the calm evenings, so full of beautiful incidents; the return at sunset to the town with groups of peasants carrying up their

corn, or large parties of girls bearing each her conca, or vessel of water from the pure spring at the foot of the rock. And at night, how calm and bright was the lake, like a line of silver, below the palace windows in the light of the full moon, the old castle flinging long shadows over the silent town!

September 4th, 1843. By sunrise I had left my friends, and was on my way from Celano to San Benedetto,[a] a little village near the site of the ancient Marruvium. The walk thither was not over delightful or interesting, as the flat ground by the lake side was merely a continued garden of almonds or gran-turco, and an east wind blew so cuttingly over the Forca Carusa, that by the time I reached San Benedetto I was unable to speak from violent rheumatism and toothache. Hitherto I had been most fortunate in weather, but the autumnal season now approaching threatened a change, and indeed these high mountains are subject to variable climate even during the summer months of most years.

Don Angelo Felici Ottavi, to whom Don Pamfilo Tabassi had recommended me, was a hearty good sort of a man, who offered to take charge of my luggage, while I crossed the Lake of Fucino to Trasacco, (of which I wanted to make a drawing,) provided I would dine at his house on my return.

I was placed in a flat-bottomed boat or punt, and two men soon carried me over the quiet lake, whose glassy surface reflected every cloud in the loveliest colours. Distant Alba and Velino were diminished to faint horizon objects, but the mountains on the eastern and southern side of the water were very grand. Numbers of cormorants hover over the Lake, or sit watching on poles placed for fishing in the shallowest parts of it.

At Trasacco, where I arrived before noon, I found old Don Bernardo de' Gasparis, with his six sons, Dons Serafino, Cesidio, Loreto, Filippo, Giacomo, and Odoardo, who all received me with the same cordiality as on our first visit, and treated me with every kindness. All Trasacco was in agitation at the horrible news just arrived, that Don Tita Masciarelli's coachman had murdered the housekeeper at Paterno; that the murderer, who had been committed to the

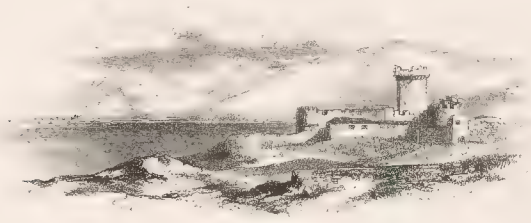
[a] Cramer, i. 328. Sir R. C. Hoare, i. 359. Pope Boniface IV. was born at S. Benedetto, according to Martelli, Antichità dei Sicoli, ii. 25.

prison of Celano, had strangled himself almost immediately on being left alone, so that no further light could be thrown on the tragedy, which created a great sensation throughout the Marsica, where murders are exceedingly unfrequent.

September 5, 1843. I was anxious to arrive at Pescina by night, so I took an early leave of the good De' Gasparis, although I could willingly have explored the neighbourhood of Trasacco more at leisure. Don Serafino insisted on my accepting a valuable old book, the *Memorie della Chiesa di Trasacco*, a little work, which, like many of those compiled by natives of these small towns, contained some interest dispersed in a world of heavy detail.

I coasted the sides of the Lake in a punt; and in many parts the perpendicular rocks which enclose it are full of grandeur: on one, a little hermitage is perched, to which one can ascend by steps from the water's edge. At a spot called Arciprete—(supposed to recall Arcippe, an ancient city,[a])—there are some pretty glades and patches of cultivation, and flocks of milk-white goats were lying by the side of the waters: all communication with these spots except by means of boats is cut off, owing to the Lake being now too high to admit of any other.

At Ortucchio,[a] a small town on a low peninsula at the south-eastern side of the Lake, I landed to look at the old Castle which still stands in good preservation; its drawbridge, &c., being completely perfect.



CASTLE OF ORTUCCHIO.

[a] Cramer i. 331.

[b] Ortucchio does not seem to have occupied the site of any ancient town; and the only notice I have found of its existence is, that it was besieged and taken by Roberto Orsini in the fifteenth century. Summonte, iii. 367.

There is a good deal of the picturesque about the narrow streets and dilapidated outskirts of the village, and I regretted not having had more time to devote to it.

The heat was intense as we punted across to San Benedetto, between which and Ortucchio the views are very beautiful towards the mountains of Lecce, and Venere: this last place merited a visit, for there are many remains of antiquity in its vicinity, but the sun obliged me to hurry on to San Benedetto, where I passed the midday hours, and dined very unsatisfactorily on barbel and vinocotto.

San Benedetto is less than two hours' walk from Pescina, to which town, the modern representative of the Marsican capital and the residence of its Bishop, I set out as soon as it was cool enough. Several shapeless masses of ruin are near the borders of the Lake, and at a short distance is the ruined Cathedral of the Marsi, a most picturesque fragment, and full of interest for an architect.

Pescina is a large town, containing three thousand inhabitants, strikingly situated on the side of a wild ravine or gorge, through which the little river Giovenco flows to the Lake. Its houses are piled one above the other very picturesquely, and most of them have pigeon-houses attached.[a] A ruined castle crowns the whole picture.

On arriving, I went to Don Stefano Tabassi, a courteous and well-informed person, who lives in the Palazzo Tomacetti, at the foot of the town, containing, as usual, a labyrinth of rooms, hung with faded tapestry or red cloth, and adorned with portraits *ad infinitum*. Two young abbati, his nephews, accompanied me to the great lion of Pescina, the house where on July 14, 1602,[b] Cardinal Mazarin, (whose father was governor of the town) was born. The view of the old house is extremely pleasing, with its ruined loggia, standing on a crag which juts out over the ravine, while behind it rises a pyramid of pigeon-houses surmounted by the Castle, and beyond, wild rock and distant mountains complete the scene. (See PLATE XXI.)

Don Stefano de' Tabassi keeps a very excellent table, and his wines are admirable. His conversation was very entertaining, and our hours of society

[a] The pigeons kept in Pescina are exceedingly numerous: the refuse of their houses is used as manure for hemp, and fetches fifteen carlini the sack.

[b] Gualdo Hist. del Minist. del Card. G. Mazarin.



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and supper passed cheerfully by. The unaffected and well-bred hospitality of these people cannot be too much appreciated.

September 6th, 1843. The morning was lost to me by one of those bitterly cold and violent winds to which the ravine of Pescina is subject; these, and the confined situation of the town, would make it a very undesirable residence. Numbers of women were coming to the Piazza with wood from the high mountains above Gioja: most of them were from Lecce, and wore a very pretty costume, a rarity throughout the Abruzzi, where the dress of the women is usually very plain and common-place. The aprons of these damsels were of all colours and patterns, and worked by hand; but on no account would their owners either be drawn themselves, or sell any part of their dress, and they ran away and hid themselves if I only took a sketch-book from my pocket.

The afternoon, when the weather became more serene, was passed in drawing quietly below the Mazarini Loggia, and about the town, amongst whose scattered outskirts many pretty studies might be found.

In the evening there was a shock of earthquake, but no damage resulted; and the bells of Pescina rang the usual alarm on these occasions, namely, three "*tocs*" of the Campana.

September 7th, 1843. Most bitter pass of Pescina! How the chilling wind wailed between your bleak rocks, as I set off towards Scanno at sunrise! Surely the infant Mazarin must have been rheumatism-proof, since his natal mansion is more exposed than any in the town to the sweeping rush of cold air. Nor was I a whit less comfortless at having taken leave of my agreeable friend, Don Stefano Tabassi; nor did the prospect of a very dull and uninteresting journey, from the time I came out of the narrow passage of the stream to the valley of Ortona, at all mend the matter. Dull indeed it was, that barren vale, shut in by two lines of equally barren hill, with here and there a spot of corn, or a few scattered oaks, or a solitary poplar dotting the bleak landscape. Yet the constant courtesy of the Abruzzi peasantry would lighten even a drearier ramble.

"*Occorre cosa?*"—can I do anything for you?—said most of them whom I met; or, at the least, their salutation would be "*Buonviaggio!*" or "*Stia forte!*"

Ortona, below which I passed, is altogether unattractive and unworthy a second look, so I hastened on, and, leaving the road to Scanno on the left, proceeded to a village called San Sebastiano, where a French company have established an iron-foundry, to the agent of which D. Stefano Tabassi had given me a letter, not that the *Ferrerià* was an interesting subject to me, but everybody said I ought to see it. Indeed, most of the poor people about here seemed much excited about these iron-works; but as a company of speculators have lately settled themselves near the Maiella, with the intention of extracting sugar from potatoes, the simple peasantry make an odd jumble of the two different *mestieri*. "*Siete di quelli chi tirano lo zucchero dal ferro?*" said one, and "*sarete della compagnia chi stanno a far la ferro con patate?*" was the question of another; (for a stranger is so rare an occurrence in these wild districts, that he is sure to be set down as one of the iron-workers, or sugar-makers.)

At San Sebastiano I fell in with Monsr. Richardon, the overseer of the new works, who informed me that his principal was absent, but invited me very heartily to join his *colazione* (to which he was then returning) and thereby I passed an hour very agreeably. Two or three of his lively countrymen had lately arrived from France, and entertained us by their horror of sundry omissions of cleanliness on the part of the aborigines of San Sebastiano, to which the older colonists seemed well broken in; but Monsr. Richardon recalled to their memory some village in Brittany, where, so far from soup-plates being only washed *occasionally*, the inhabitants substituted shallow holes cut in the wooden dinner-table, which communicated by channels with a perpetual tureen in the centre, into which the soup was poured, and diverged therefrom into each guest's plate or trough, to the great saving of trouble and earthenware.

After luncheon I followed my host to the new establishment, which is planted by a beautiful stream of water below a neighbouring village, the name of which I cannot recollect. The scene was really curious; nearly two hundred peasants were at work on the rising buildings: oxen dragging timber, hammers sounding, and all this bustle of activity greatly contrasting with the

desolate solitude of the valley around. The iron ore is obtained in the neighbouring mountain of Lecco, and the Frenchmen expect that the whole of their foundry will be completed in another year.

I could not accept Monsr. Richardon's invitation to pass the night at San Sebastiano, as my time was portioned out; so I pursued my route on a capital horse the good-natured man insisted on my taking to the top of the mountain, which is to be climbed before reaching Scanno. I had the greatest curiosity to see that town, having frequently heard of it from some of its inhabitants, who annually visit Rome during the holy week, where their curious head-dress makes them easily distinguishable.

From the summit of the long hills there is the loveliest possible bird's-eye view of the whole Lake of Fucino, lying in unbroken deep-blue in its circle of purple hills. I turned from that beautiful scene with regret, and commenced following my guide through a long beechwood, till the mountains and vale of Scanno burst on the view in all their dreary majesty; no vegetation; no break in the hills to charm the eye with some milder scene beyond, but towering walls of bare rock, shivered into ravines, or formed by nature into gigantic buttresses, crowned with light gray crags and points against the dark-blue sky, and surrounding a long plain fully as barren as its confines. As I looked down on the desolate scene below me, a winding path among the great fragments of rock, with which this valley is thickly covered over, led my eye to the remotest part of it, where the dark indigo-coloured Lake of Scanno, with one bright building on its edge, and a fringe of trees at its upper extremity, lay solitary and gloomy in its mountain prison.

At the end of a long descent I found myself opposite to the mournful little town of Villalago, in passing which I caught a glimpse of a chasm, the Gole or Foce di Scanno, which might be drawn as the Poet's Inferno; but my present way lay onward through the wild plain, whose appearance was by no means improved by a nearer investigation.

Not so the Lago di Scanno, which is really one of the most perfectly beautiful spots in nature, and the more for being in so desert a place. Its dark waters slumber below bare mountains of great height; and their general effect might recall Wastwater in Cumberland, but that every craggy hill was of wilder and grander form; and that the golden hues of an Italian

September evening gave it a brilliancy rarely known in our own north. At the upper end of the Lake, which may be a mile and a half in length, an avenue of beautiful oaks, dipping their branches into the water, shade the rocky path, and lead to a solitary chapel, the only building in sight, save a hermitage on the mountain beyond. The beauty and stillness of this remote Lake were most impressive. (See PLATE XXII.)

As yet, the town of Scanno was unseen. A wide, marshy plain, through which the river Sagittaria flows, and a tract of white stones were to be passed, until, on a considerable eminence, but shut out by enclosing mountains from any view but of the bleakest rocks immediately around, behold Scanno, a clean-looking town, with two or three *Campanili* and principal houses in prominent situations. (See PLATE XXIII.) As I wound up the ascent to its gate, I was struck by the cleanliness and silence of the place, and by the strange turbaned figures, gliding about the well-paved streets.



FORMER COSTUME OF THE WOMEN OF SCANNO.

The costume of the women of Scanno is extremely peculiar, and suggests



LAGO DI CAMO



S. ANNA

an Oriental origin, particularly when (as is not unusually the case with the older females,) a white handkerchief is bound round the lower part of the face, concealing all but the eyes and nose. In former days, the material of the Scannese dress was scarlet cloth richly ornamented with green velvet, gold lace, &c., the shoes of worked blue satin, and the shoulder-straps of massive silver, a luxury of vestments now only possessed by a very few. At present, both the skirt and boddice are of black or dark-blue cloth, the former being extremely full, and the waist very short; the apron is of scarlet or crimson stuff.

The head-dress is very striking: a white handkerchief is surmounted by a falling cap of dark cloth, among the poorer orders; but of worked purple satin with the rich, and this again is bound round, turbanwise, by a white or primrose-coloured fillet, striped with various colours, though, excepting on festa days, the poor do not wear this additional band.



PRESENT COSTUME OF THE WOMEN OF SCANNO.

The hair is plaited very beautifully with riband; and the ear-rings, buttons,

neck-laces, and chains are of silver, and in rich families, often exceedingly costly.

It is the prettiest thing in the world to see the children, who have beautiful faces, and are all turbaned, even as little babies. As for the women, they are decidedly the most beautiful race I saw in the Abruzzi: — their fresh and clear complexion, fine hair, good features, and sweet expression, are delightful; and owing to their occupation being almost entirely that of spinning wool, their faces have a delicacy, which their countrywomen who work in the fields cannot lay claim to.

Everything about Scanno is odd and quaint, and unlike any other Italian town, and the sight of every house, with its fair inmates spinning at the old-fashioned wheels before the doors, was very pleasant, as I passed up the well-paved streets to the house of the family, to whom the Giudice of Antrodoco had given me a letter of introduction. The inhabitants seemed particularly calm and silent, indulging little in that animated speech or action so characteristic of the people of the south. The whole population of the Abruzzi provinces, have, indeed, much more repose of manner than is usual with their countrymen, and are a great contrast to their noisy brethren nearer Naples.

Of the men of Scanno, who dress in dark blue cloth with brown woollen gaiters, very few are seen in the town, as they are principally on the neighbouring mountains in summer, and during winter in Apulia, with the flocks, in which the wealth of Scanno consists. Wool forms the great article of trade between Scanno and the neighbouring towns, and long files of mules laden with it are constantly passing through the narrow defile towards Solmona, one of the few outlets from this secluded valley.

My new host is said to be very wealthy, and though his palace is very large now, yet he is doubling its extent. He was not at first within, but I found his mother, (a well-bred and handsome old gentlewoman, wearing the Scannese costume,) overlooking the preparations for supper, (it was already *Ave Maria*,) in a spacious kitchen or rather hall, whose nice order and complete appointments of crockery, and bright copper and tin utensils, would have done no discredit to the best farmhouse in Old England. Every part of the house seemed equally well cared for. Our party at supper consisted of the master of the house, his sister, and their uncle. When I asked if their mother was coming

—"*è occupata*" was the answer. As for the sister she never said a word; no, not one; and I should have thought she was dumb if she had not arisen after a very slight meal, and, first saying "*Prosit,*"[a] with a loud voice, went out of the room. The uncle kept talking about the everlasting Thames Tunnel till I was bored to extinction.

September 8th and 9th, 1843. Scanno is an exceedingly cold place, and in winter is surrounded by snow for many months; the air is very pure and healthy. Nothing appears certainly known of the origin of the town, and the earliest notice of it is about 1450.[b] Pachichelli[c] suggests, that it may have been called *Sanno*, from its having had a Samnite origin. It is more natural to suppose that it was from the union of several colonies from various parts during the turbulent times of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, and to this the armorial insignia of the town—a cluster of castles, gives great probability. It contains about three thousand inhabitants. After drawing at the Lake, I returned to a fêsta of the Madonna, which was more worth seeing than any I ever witnessed in Italy, on account of the procession of all the women of the place in their Gala dresses; and the display of beauty was really extraordinary. At dinner, the day being Friday, tench, barbel, and bream, were the only fare: the silent sister said "*Prosit,*" as before; and the uncle would talk about that horrid Tunnel. In the afternoon, after I had finished my drawing, I rode on a good horse with Don ———; there is splendid scenery about Scanno, and I suspect the pass to Castel di Sangro would be worth exploring.

At *Ave Maria* I was delighted by the harmony of a Litany sung by great numbers of the townspeople in the principal church: the air was from *Lucia di Lammermoor*, and the effect was very pleasing. There is a great deal of musical feeling in these country towns; snatches of melody continually strike the ear, and I often longed to have more leisure to gather such scraps.

[a] The Latin "*Prosit,*" is frequently used, among the middle and lower classes in some parts of Italy, by persons rising from table; or when passing through a room where others are at meals. It is also addressed to persons when sneezing.

[b] Giustiniani. [c] Pachichelli, iii. 31.

" O come passano
I dì felici,
E non ci resta
Che'l sospirar!
Pass' il contento
L' amor, la gioja
E quel ch' è peggio
La vita ancor."

Such were the words, though the air I cannot recall, of a mournful stanza I often heard sung at Scanno.

Supper: barbel, bream, a trout, (by good luck,) *Prosit* and the Tunnel.

September 9th, 1843. Drawing the beautiful Lake and the costumes of the servants in the house occupied me all day. But it was in vain to hope for a smile from these very obliging, but too sedate people, who were unlike the families I had hitherto seen. I thought, why *do* you build such rooms and a new palace, with nothing to fill it but this dulness? And how *can* you live day after day on tench and barbel, barbel and tench?

It was my last evening at Scanno. The dark-eyed sister was hopelessly mute, "*E stata in Solmona?*"—"*Non Signore,*—" *In Aquila?*"—*Nemmeno*—"*Va qualche volta a spasso?*"—*Signor no.*—"*Si occupano le donne di Scanno dalle affari di casa,*" said Don ———.

So I gave it up.———"*Prosit.*"

September 10, 1843. It was an object with me to make some drawings of the Foce or Gole di Scanno, and as the finest parts of the pass are too far from Scanno or Anversa, to be conveniently reached from either, I had obtained a letter from the French Agent at San Sebastiano, to a family in the little town of Villalago,[a] which is the most central point. To this place, Don —— accompanied me, after I had bid farewell to Scanno and its good people.

As we reached Villalago, my host, that was to be, happened to be outside the town, and half the population (who are very poor and not extremely prepossessing in appearance,) were thronging round a small church, whose open doors displayed two large naked figures in the midst of flames representing

[a] Villa Lago contains 700 inhabitants. Giustiniani.

purgatory. My new friend and his family had none of that cheerful cordiality I had hitherto so constantly remarked, and when Don —— left me on his return to Scanno, I could not help thinking that I had got into rather an odd place.

Don ——, one of my new friends, volunteered to shew me a part of the Foce or pass; so down we went, and I want words to give even a feeble idea of the terrible magnificence of the scene. Villalago stands on the brink of a precipice above the tremendous abyss through which the Sagittaria, in winter a formidable torrent, rushes towards the plain of Solmona; a narrow mule-path follows its windings, now through an open space cumbered with fragments of shattered rock,—now through a chasm so contracted as to admit the river and path only. One of these passes, the Stretti di San Luigi, is of fearful height and narrowness, and except in summer weather is totally impassable.



STRETTI DI SAN LUIGI.

Eagles and ravens abound throughout the whole of this terrific gorge, whose aspect chills the mind, as much as the cold wind sweeping through it does the body. Towards *Ave Maria* we returned, halting at the Grotto and Chapel of

San Domenico, a curious and ancient Hermitage in a cavern amidst the wildest possible mountain scenery, and thence we followed the upper pathway to my host's house in Villalago. They are the principal people in this little town, and I cannot conceive a much less comfortable residence than their Palazzo; its only recommendation is, that, placed on a perpendicular height, it commands one of the most extraordinary views I ever saw, down the ghastly gorge I have been describing.

Although these good people were hospitable in their way, truth obliges one to say that the uncleanliness of both house and owners was something uncommon; and this, united to a curiosity unique as far as my experience went among the Abruzzese, was depressing and uncomfortable. A pale daughter-in-law, who sighed as she told me she was a native of Ortona, "*un paese almeno polito,*" was the only interesting person of the house, except her two little girls, who though sharing the family evil of neglect were pretty and intelligent; and we had great fun in playing cats-cradle (a common Abruzzo game,) together. After they went to bed, two or three hours of severe *penitenza* ensued till supper,—the grumblings of the whole family against men and things in general being far from enlivening,—and I was glad to feign weariness and retire to a room, (the like of which happily one does not often see,) where I sate in a chair and dozed till morning.

September 11, 1843. As much as possible I passed the day in drawing the scenery, the grand character of which is worth the closest attention: but though there are studies for a month in its neighbourhood, I resolved on leaving the town on the morrow. Yet, this same Villalago has formerly seen more prosperous days, judging by the remains of magnificently worked satin and velvet dresses still possessed by some of its very old inhabitants. At present, as an old beggar-woman said to me,—(one of the few I observed throughout the Abruzzo provinces,) "*siamo qui,* —— *senza denaro, senza pane, senza panni, senza speranza, senza niente!*"

September 12, 1843. Long before sunrise I was on my way down the Foce with a man and luggage-mule, and my step was not less light from any

regrets at leaving Villalago. Beyond the Stretti di San Luigi the pass becomes every moment more appalling and sublime, in one part widening out into a broad vale, over which on a precipitous rock, a little village, Castro di Valva, seems to hang suspended and tottering; but close to Anversa, (the castle of which is seen at the opening of the gorge,) the stupendous rocks which enclose the path are really beyond imagining. It is a relief to escape from this cold prison, to the bright open hill beyond.

The town of Anversa[a] stands on a steep eminence, and its shattered Castle commands the entrance of the pass. The name of the Arciprete, Don Colombo Gatta, had been given me as the only person likely to receive strangers; so to his house I went, a clean and handsome palazzo: the absence of inns makes this sort of dependence on private hospitality irksome; but there is no other mode of seeing these unfrequented parts of Italy.

"*La fisonomia vostra vi basta per tutta raccomandazione,*" quoth the polite Don Colombo, who would not so much as hear the name of the person who desired me to mention him. "*Entrate subito per carita!*" and the friendly clergyman forthwith led me to a neat room, where he insisted on my reposing till dinner, and from the windows of which a triangle of the bright shining plain of Solmona was visible, between the hills that shut in the valley of the Sagittaria.

The Arch-priest's dining-room was a curious one, the walls being most quaintly decked with coloured zoological drawings, all of which had their names in large letters below each—Uomo, Donna, Cavallo, Cane, Civetta, Triglia, or Farfalla—a highly requisite precaution, considering the extreme improbability of the spectator's discovering what many of the paintings were intended to represent. No fault however could possibly be found with Don Colombo's dinner; his plain lamb-cutlets, good fish, roast fowl, with *entrées* of vegetables and pickles; his super-excellent wine with snow, and his melon-steaks fried with cheese and pepper, which at least were a novelty.

In the afternoon I walked to Cocullo, a small town remarkable only for its possession of a *relique*—a tooth of S. Domenico—on account of which numerous pilgrims flock thither continually. Any person who is bitten by a snake or mad dog, be he either in Naples or Rome, loses no time in setting

[a] It contains 850 inhabitants. Giustiniani.

off to the shrine of S. Domenico, in Cocullo: and there is an annual fêsta in the town, at which the number of snake-charmers is very great; the floor of the church, I have been told by many persons, exhibiting swarms of reptiles crawling over it. I was not fortunate enough to see this display, but I have no doubt of the fact.[a]

Cocullo is situated above Anversa, and looks down on the sullen opening to the pass of Scanno, with its grim wall of mountain. I had not time to draw the scene as I wished, for the sun had set, and though I made all haste, it was so late when I arrived at Anversa, that I found the good-natured Arciprete in a state of great agitation lest I should have become a prey to the "*Pericoli della Notte,*" namely, *il perdere la strada, il cascare d' un precipizio,* or *essere ferito dai cani del campo:* all of which evils he set forth diligently during supper-time.

September 13th, 1843. Drew much at the mouth of the pass; a scene so majestic that much time might be spent in doing it justice. As I sat below a huge rock, on which a little goat-herd was piping to his scattered charge, the sound of a chorus of many voices gradually roused the echoes of the mighty walls: a most simple and oft-repeated air, slowly chanted by long files of pilgrims, mostly women of Castel di Sangro, (perhaps fifty in number); they were on their way to the shrine of S. Domenico, in Cocullo, and came in succession down the winding path, carrying large bales of different coloured cloths on their heads, and walking with long sticks. (See PLATE XXIV).

Such little incidents are sought for in vain by the high-road traveller. Long after the last of the pilgrims had disappeared, the notes rang at intervals through the hollow, and then all was left to its own gloomy silence.

September, 14th, 1843. The *Arciprete,* who is a very rich *Possidente,* and looks over his vineyards and fields of Gran Turco far and wide from his high

[a] For a Notice of the Marsic Snake-charmers, see K. Craven.


F. Lear del. et lith.

home in Anversa, had a party of his friends last evening, and amused them with my drawings. The lower orders speak in an almost unintelligible *patois*, totally different to that of the adjacent towns.

In the afternoon I left my hospitable host; for although the pass contained many a day's work, I had yet to draw in the neighbourhood of Solmona, whither I went by a path, along the course of the Sagittaria through a narrow valley of oak and olives, with Gran Turco flourishing beneath them. After a walk of about six miles over this well irrigated vale, often meeting long strings of Scanno mules laden with wool, I left Bugnara, (apparently an uninteresting town,) on my right, and shortly beyond, the valley opens to the full view of the plain of Solmona with all its mountain beauties.

On entering the old city of the Peligni for the second time, I went to the friendly Palazzo Tabassi, where Don Francesco (called in the abbreviating Neapolitan language Don Ciccio) received me with the greatest possible friendliness.

September 15, 16, 17, 1843. These days I passed most pleasantly in Solmona; to praise the good taste and kindness of my hosts, would be but to repeat what I have already recorded of the Masciarelli, Ferranti, &c.

The mornings went in sketching in the neighbourhood, or in wandering about the picturesque market-place, where the groups of peasantry are very amusing. The women of Pettorano and Introdacqua, neighbouring towns, (to the latter of which I made a morning excursion, but was not repaid for my walk,) alone wear peculiar costumes; the head-dress of both being of extreme length, and the bust much ornamented with ribbons. The women of Solmona plait their fine hair in a beautiful manner.

Our dinner hour was the usual one of noon.

One day, Don Saverio Giovennucci, the most remarkable person of Solmona, dined with us; he is one hundred and four years of age, but in possession of all his mental and bodily faculties, and a very agreeable companion. He told me that he had never known a day's illness, and that he had outlived all his children and grandchildren, and that only one great-grandchild remained to him. "*Ed io,*" said the cheerful old gentleman, "*sto pronto, quando sarà la volontà del Signore di chiamarmi.*"

In the evenings we made *prima sera* visits to some of the Solmonese families, among which the members of that of Don Paolo Corvi were very pleasing. There was an old aunt also, "*Zia Agnese*," dependent on some of the Tabassi, and confined to her bed. No day passed without a half-hour being spent at her bedside; and one could not but be struck by the affection existing between all the members of this amiable family.

At most of these evening visits, it is customary to hand round *rosolio* and *confetti* in great abundance. *Confetti* are the great production of Solmona, which contains twelve great manufactories of these sugary toys, so much esteemed that they are sent over all Italy: the operation of making them is very curious.

September 18, 1843. Leaving my goods at the Casa Tabassi, I set off (to save time) in a *corricola*, towards Popoli, but I was glad to leave my vehicle below Rocca Casale, up to which I toiled in order to draw it, though I found nothing for my pains. The rest of my morning I passed at work below the ruins of Corfinium, (see PLATE XI.) and by noon was at the inn of Popoli, which town employed my time and pencil for the rest of the day.

September 19, 1843. Off from Popoli a long while before day, for I had cut out much work to be done ere sunset. A crescent moon and stars shone brightly as I left the town, where the jingling bells of impatient mules broke the silence of the streets. The sun rose as I again passed Corfinium.

Skirting Rajano, I wandered up the hill we had descended on July 29; and by the time I had drawn Goriano, and retraced my steps to Rajano, it was well-nigh noon. Two peasants of San Martino, near Chieti, carrying each fifty ducats' worth of wooden ware to a fair at Avezzano, with some of which little boxes I filled my pockets, (they cost about twopence each,) as memorials of Abruzzo, were the only persons I saw during my excursion.

As to the Convent of Rajano, the friendly monks refreshed me with cabbage-soup, boiled beef, roast liver and figs, and sent me on my way rejoicing to the Chapel of San Venanzio, a most picturesque hermitage in a neigh-

bouring ravine. All these matters filled up my day so thoroughly, that it was dark when I reached the roof of Don Ciccio Tabassi, and my drawings were a great amusement to him and his friends during the evening, Zia Agnese included.

September 21, 1843. Yesterday was a day of rest at Solmona, which to-day I left three hours before sunrise, and with regret, for none but pleasant memories are connected with my stay there. Of the many agreeable acquaintances these wanderings have been the means of my forming, Don F. Tabassi is perhaps one of the most intellectual and amiable.

I had decided on revisiting the provinces of Chieti and Teramo, to sketch over some of our already explored ground, and perhaps make further excursions as occasion might offer, my stay always depending on weather, which, during October, is frequently very uncertain among these high mountains.

I, my guide, and his ass,[a] now followed the high-road to Naples, (a continual ascent,) and arrived at sunrise at the town of Pettorano, which contains about three thousand inhabitants, where I lingered to draw a most glorious view over the plain of Solmona, the Gran Sasso lifting his pyramid of rock over the high mountains beyond Corfinium.

About nine miles from Solmona, after a long and steep ascent, we reached Rocca di Vall' Oscuro, a wretched little village,—picturesque enough; but one had no time to draw it. Two miles beyond, we arrived at the celebrated Piano di 5 Miglia, which I had heard and read so much of, that I looked forward to its passage with a curiosity not a little damped by the sight of a dull, narrow plain, with very little of the romantic in its appearance, and moreover, with a high road running from end to end. Yet, in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, whoever was to pass this formidable spot, made his will previously; here in February, 1528, three hundred infantry of the Venetian League against Charles V. perished in the snow; and in the following year, March, 1529, more than five hundred Germans, under the Prince of Orange, met with a similar fate.[b] So little, during summer, is there any appearance of danger in this melancholy plain, that one hardly believes in these

[a] The expense of a mule or ass for a day's journey is usually six or eight carlines; and the driver depends on your generosity for a *buona mano*.

[b] Del Re, vol. ii. p. 193.

fatal stories; but although the formation of a high-road has made the pass of the Piano di 5 Miglia less frightful than of old, the sudden falls of snow, and the high winds to which, from its elevated situation, it is very subject, cause it still to be hurried over with some anxiety during winter, and not the less so that its gloomy neighbourhood is in that season much infested by wolves.

The Emperor Charles V. erected towers at frequent intervals across this pass to serve as shelter for travellers, but they were found so convenient for the marauders who then, and long after, harassed Italy, that these were all destroyed: at present a double line of high posts marks the direction of the road even when the snow lies deeply on the plain.

The country is wild and not very interesting beyond the Piano di 5 Miglia: a plain below the town of Rivasondoli, and a descent to the rather picturesque village of Rocca di Raso; and then, long windings of the road through fine oak woods to Castel di Sangro, the approach to which is extremely noble, and commands extensive lines of horizon with grand mountain forms; but the day was gloomy and the wind high, so I drew nought.

It was dark when we entered Castel di Sangro,[a] a considerable town on the confines of the province of Abruzzo Ulteriore Secondo. It boasts of one tolerable inn; and the excellent trout of the river Sangro furnished me with part of a very good supper.

September 22, 1843. It was absolutely too cold to draw, though I worked hard till I had taken a correct outline of Castel di Sangro, (See PLATE XXV.) some views of which are really splendid. A day or two might have been well devoted to visiting Alfidena and its Cyclopean remains, and had the weather been more favorable, I would certainly have done so. I was sorry also to give up all idea of visiting the fine mountains of the Province of Molise or Campobasso (the land of the Samnites), whose dark-blue crags lay southward, among cloud and gloom; but I felt desirous of leaving my present abode, which was chilly and comfortless after the bright cheerful vales of the Marsi and Peligni: so I hired a man and mule to convey me and my *roba*, to Monte Nero D'Omo, a town about twenty miles off, whither Don Saverio de' Tommasis, whom I had met at Magliano, had invited me.

[a] Castellum Caracenorum. Cramer, ii. 228.



E.Lear del. et lith.



E. Lear del et lith

Our route lay along the banks of the Sangro, through a low close valley, by shady slopes of young oak, marked by no feature of striking interest.

Towards noon, a long and bare ascent brought us to Pizzo-ferrato, (in the province of Chieti, or Abruzzo Citeriore,) when we were glad to take shelter during a violent storm of hail and thunder. It is a most romantic village, (containing about one thousand inhabitants,) at the foot of an isolated rock crowned by a convent; nothing can be wilder or less interesting than the treeless country immediately around this place, nor more superb than the endless view over ridges of purple hills crowned by little towns, forming, as it were, a continuous plain down to the shores of the Adriatic. (See PLATE XXVI.) In little more than another hour's walk we reached the brow of a hill, whence the prospect is yet grander than that we had left. Monte Nero d'Omo, a compact, modern-looking town, was on our right, and the district of Lanciano, as far as the bright blue Adriatic, before us; while the left is shut in by the enormous Maiella,[a] whose summit was already covered with snow. The circuit of this great mountain would doubtless well repay the trouble of visiting it in detail, but such a journey should be attempted at an earlier season of the year, as the torrents in the ravines of the Maiella are formidable.

The palace of the De' Tommasis is at the top of Monte Nero D'Omo, the streets of which town are all flights of stairs, but well kept and clean. The whole place was in a ferment expecting the return of Don Saverio and his wife, who had resided in the Marsica for two years, and their arrival took place just after I had been received in the most friendly manner by his family. Great was the ringing of bells, the clamour of the people, the processions and the drum-beating, and the rushing forth of the whole town to welcome their landlord.

The evening's entertainment was rather plentiful than *soignée*, but the family, though homely, was a friendly one.

September 23rd, 1843. I returned to Pizzo-ferrato to draw it, and I went on to Gambarale, a picturesque place, but frightfully bleak and desolate. In the afternoon I drew Monte Nero D'Omo, as far as the immense extent of

[a] The Maiella is celebrated for the production of medicinal herbs, &c. Tenore. Viaggio in Abruzzio Citeriore.

view permitted; the sunset over the Adriatic, and the lighting up of the gigantic Maiella were gorgeous. But, besides being rather weary of wandering about alone, I found the cold at these great elevations very unbearable, and I determined to omit much of the Chieti province, which is not so adapted for drawing, and to give more time to parts of the Marsica which I had not yet seen.

September 24th, 1843. I had not intended to start till to-morrow, but the clouds on the Maiella decided me on endeavouring to reach the coast to-day, having a deep-rooted fear of being detained by ten days of stormy weather, which might render travelling impossible here: whereas, once in safety at Chieti, roads either to Rome or Naples are always available. So I wished my good-natured hosts adieu, and with my guide and mule began the descent, through potato-fields without end, that vegetable being the great commodity of Monte Nero D'Omo. After passing the village of Torricella, we arrived by steep and slippery paths of clay, (for it had rained all night,) at Gesso di Palena, where a great fair was being held; the place was alive with people, and the drums and bells highly distracting. I purchased a luncheon of two loaves, and more grapes than it was possible to eat, for three *grane,* and was glad when I had threaded the closely packed crowds, intermixed with sheep, pigs, and laden mules. All the people appeared a civil race: the men wore the most pointed hats I had observed in these districts.

Casoli, a town I should much like to re-visit, on account of its grand situation, was the next place we reached, and then we descended to the ford at the river of Palena, a broad stream which flows into the Sangro, whose course to the Adriatic is marked by a distant line of white stones. Beyond this the country grew more cultivated and less picturesque, and we crossed a weary series of corn-hills to Sant' Eusanio, the fourth town in our day's ramble, and thence we ascended and descended continual undulations like those of August (*see page* 35), till lo! the distant outline of the Gran Sasso projected beyond the receding Maiella. Hereupon began a different world, for the district of Lanciano is a great garden, and after the cold mountain atmosphere all seemed delicious sunshine and warmth: the fig and the vine, and fruit-trees of all descriptions, were on either hand in great luxuriance,

and everything seemed brilliant and flourishing as we came to the gates of Lanciano, anciently Anxano, and capital of the Frentani.[a] The entrance to the city is highly picturesque: a deep fosse surrounds its towered walls, and the plain beyond with the remote Monte Corno are exquisitely beautiful.

The great charms of Lanciano are for the architect; the *facciate* of two venerable Gothic churches have been frequently drawn, but the pride of the modern inhabitants of the city is the Cathedral, or Santa Maria del Ponte, built on a great bridge crossing the ravine which surrounds part of the walls. For the rest, Lanciano is clean and well-paved, and the walls and out-skirts abound with scraps and picturesque morsels.

The *padrone* of the *Locanda* to which I went dared not receive me without my passport being first examined, so I was obliged to present me at the house of the Sindaco, who was sitting in a room full of people, before which assembly I had to give an account of myself. These people cannot imagine one's motives for travelling to be simply the love of seeing new places, &c.; and the more one strives to convince them that it is so, the more certain are they that one has other designs. "*Dove vai!*" they scream out, if one goes but a foot's length out of the high-way to seek a point for drawing.)

After this public examination I was purified in the eyes of the city, and fearlessly received accordingly by Vincenzo Montarelli, a civil fellow, whose *Locanda* was tolerable, and his dinner excellent, especially in the article of wines and fruit; for the melons and grapes of Lanciano are famous in the Abruzzi.

September 25th, 1843. To Lanciano I could devote but one day, which was a cloudless but a cold one, and I chose to spend it in drawing the view from the walls, and in wandering about the neighbourhood, which contains many pretty features. By good fortune I had a letter to Don Vincenzo Coletta, Sottintendente of the Distretto, an agreeable person, who has two charming and intelligent daughters. They very good-naturedly invited me to the opera, where *Sappho* was very well performed; so the evening passed away merrily enough.

[a] Cramer. Also written Anxia, and Anxa. Cramer, ii. 256. The modern Lanciano is said to be famous for tortoises and truffles. Pachichelli, iii. 9.

September 26th, 1843. My wish was to reach Abadessa, (one of the Greek colonies settled in Southern Italy,) by sun-set, a long journey of about thirty-five miles; but my guide Basilio, of Monte Nero D' Omo, who was well acquainted with the country, warranted my arrival there. I reserved a possibility of halting at Chieti.

The day was very hot, and the ascent to Frisa, and thence through monotonous cultivation, was tedious: the lessening Maiella and distant Corno, were the only hopes of the landscape. Beyond Frisa, the ups and downs were equally tiresome: one of the ravines was full of ruined *Masserie*, cottages, gardens, &c., an earthquake in the preceding January having shaken a great tract of the higher ground into the vale below.

After many clay ravines, and sluggish streams to ford, and a great ascent from one of these hollows, we reached Tollo, a very clean looking town, but containing no *Locanda*, or hope of refreshment, although the country round was fertile in figs and vines which hung in the most tantalizing manner over the well-kept hedges. At noon we arrived at Miglianico, where a wretched little *Osteria* was our halting-place; and dry figs, bread, and *vino cotto* all we could obtain as lunch. This seems curious in so rich a district as that through which we were passing, but it is the habit of the few persons who travel in this country to carry their own food with them.

Chieti seemed as difficult of access as on August 1st., and I resolved during the ascent not to enter it, but skirting its walls, descended into the valley of the Pescara, which I reached late in the afternoon, and after long waiting, (for the ferry was occupied by a succession of large market parties,) crossed the river into the Province of Abruzzo Ulteriore Primo, and took the route to the left. Four or five miles brought us to Cepagatta, an inconsiderable town; and two more to a quiet little vale of oaks, above which the church tower of Abadessa peeped humbly forth. While ascending to the town I was struck by the appearance of what I thought a group of Turks, but who were really women of Abadessa in their costume, which they have preserved, though the Albanese men dress like ourselves in dark cloth, &c., and only retain the long moustache as a national characteristic. The costume of the women of Abadessa is a white skirt, with a light-blue striped apron



ABADESSA

before, and an apron-like addition behind of woollen material, worked in a chequered pattern, usually of purple and red, or black and red. The vest is white with an embroidered sleeve and front. A red handkerchief is worn on the head.



COSTUME OF THE WOMEN OF ABADESSA

Some account of the settlement of various colonies of Greeks in the kingdom of Naples, drawn from Giustiniani's Dizionario,[a] may be interesting:

The first migration was of Albanians, and took place about 1450, under Alfonso of Arragon, who had assisted Giorgio Castrioto, (Scanderbeg,) when besieged by the Turks; several families sought shelter, and established themselves at that time in the Kingdom of Naples.

The second was under the succeeding monarch, Ferdinand, when in reward for assistance rendered to that King by Scanderbeg, several cities were granted to him; and numerous Albanian families left their own shores in consequence, establishing themselves in Castelluccio de' Sauri, (in Capitanata,) Campo Marino, &c., &c.

The third took place in 1497, after the death of Scanderbeg, when Gio-

[a] Giust. vol. x. p. 191.

vanni Castrioto his son, accompanied by many Albanians, fled to Italy from the oppression of the Turks. The Prince of Bisignano, who possessed great territory in Calabria, married Elena Castrioto, and nearly all the Greeks scattered throughout the Kingdom followed them to Calabria, and settled there, founding many towns, seven of which are in Calabria Citeriore, and twenty-seven in Calabria Ulteriore.

The fourth colony passed from Greece in 1534, during the reign of the Emperor Charles the V., from Corone, a city of the Morea, attacked by the Turks, but liberated by Andrew Doria, who gave the fugitives his protection as far as to Italy, where they settled in various parts of Capitanata, Basilicata, the Diocese of Benevento, &c.

The fifth migration was in 1647, under Philip IV., from Maina; most of the emigrants fixed themselves at Basile, in Basilicata.

In 1744 the sixth occurred, during the reign of Carlo Borbone. Abadessa, a royal property, in the Province of Abruzzo Ulteriore Primo, was given the settlers as an abode.

A seventh migration of Greeks also took place a few years later, and who established themselves in Brindisi.

These people are variously known as Albanesi, Greci, Coronei, Epiroti or Schiavoni. Some also settled in Sicily. In the Regno di Napoli, they founded forty-three towns.

Don Costantino Vlasi,—a sharp little man, to whom the De' Tommasis had given me an introduction, as the principal proprietor of the place, was sitting outside the little town when I arrived; he took me to his house immediately, an uncomfortable windy tenement with many little rooms. Don Costantino 'Greco,' as he is called by the Italians, is a widower with five children,—Dons Pietro and Antonio, Donnas Irene, Anna, and Maria, the last of which young ladies, having a headache, was in bed, where, however, I was taken to visit her without any hesitation. Donna Irene was the *belle* of the family, and was really the only handsome female I saw in the whole settlement; for though the Greek nose and forehead were very observably marked in the face of almost every individual, yet none were strictly beautiful, perhaps because their doing all the work, while the men carry on the life of sportsmen does not contribute to the delicacy of their complexion

The endless interrogations of this worthy family put my good breeding sorely to the test; but the wish to oblige was there, though the delicacy of my Marsican friends was wanting. During supper, whenever the children spoke Albanese, they caught a reproof and sometimes a thump from Don Costantino. In the course of the evening a blind young man came in "*per veder l'Inglese,*" and eventually sung twenty interminable verses of a Greek song about the battle of Navarino. When the family separated for repose, Don Constantino and a very old and hideous female domestic followed me into my chamber, the latter of whom proffered her services to "*spogliarmi,*" which offer I respectfully declined, though she again entered to tuck all the sheets round the bed, an operation I could not prevent as the doors of all the rooms were open, but was thankful when it was concluded.

September 27, 1843. Coffee was brought to everybody in bed by the same unpleasant Hebe whose affectionate attentions I had so ill received on the preceding night: her amazement and that of the rest of the family at my ablutions were amusing.

After drawing the town, (see PLATE XXVII.) I was taken to call on Papa Gregorio Callonà, their priest and village schoolmaster, a very gentlemanlike man, with a magnificently long grey beard; he shewed me the church, a plain unornamented edifice, and then his little school, where I sat with him some time over some good *café*. The children of the upper classes are taught ancient Greek and Latin as well as the Albanese dialect and Italian, but the lower peasantry talk Albanese and Italian alone. ("*Quando vogliono farsi capire,*"—said my guide of yesterday—"*parlono come Cristiani: ma fra loro come diavoli.*")

I observed in Papa Gregorio Callonà's little library, besides the old Greek Classics, the Bible in Greek and Albanese, Rollin's History, &c., &c. He informed me that he was of a good family in Candia, but had been obliged during the last wars with the Turks to leave his country, and seek refuge in this settlement, where he had accepted the charge of Pastor and Instructor.

Late in the afternoon I left the *famiglia Vlasi*, and started for Città di Penna, with an ass for my luggage, and a most tiresome Greek who equally merited the name by never ceasing to ask me questions as absurd as wearisome

I was glad to see Città di Penna under its mountain wall, and we arrived there before sunset, the same golden purple over the many hills towards the Adriatic—the same dark blue of the Gran Sasso,—and the double files of dark draped ecclesiastical students walking up the steep brick-paved streets, much as on the evening of August 1st, though my reception at night was different, and I went at once to good quarters at the Casa Michelloni.

"*E morto il vostro compagno*," said the foolish D. Giuseppe Michelloni; the son of my landlord,—an abrupt announcement, which startled me not a little: and in order to ascertain the truth, I went at once to the Baron Aliprandi, at whose house I was told I should find our old friend D. Andrea Giardini. I was right glad to see the little Syndic again; and I learned from the Baron, (who with the Baroness and a large poodle, were the equally uninteresting inhabitants of a prodigiously grand Palazzo,) that a *forastiere* was said to have fallen down the cascade of Terni, and therefore he "*supponeva*," it must be my friend, by which lively supposition, (and there was no better foundation for the report,)—my mind was very much relieved, and I returned to my supper at Michelloni's with a cheerful mind. But the spacious room we enjoyed at our first visit was now hired by an *avvocato*; and, although the good people of the house insisted on my occupying one of their own apartments, it was by no means so comfortable, there being a hole in the door, by which a variety of cats ran in and out all night long, while two turtles remained stationary on the top of the bed, moaning dismally.

September 28, 1843. Cloud and wind: it was impossible to hope for such continued good fortune in weather much longer; yet I had time to draw the town before it began to rain, (though much teased by a concourse of admiring people,) and the rest of the day I was fully occupied within the walls. Turkeys! turkeys!—there are turkeys on all sides, wherever you walk in the province of Teramo, which supplies many of the markets, both of Rome and Naples, with those birds.

Don Andrea Giardini shewed me the whole of the Palazzo Aliprandi, a noble mansion, full of old furniture, chairs, tables, mirrors, frames, &c., some of which, of carved oak, were remarkably handsome. We also saw several

other palazzi; but some of the finest are partly closed and their owners exiled on account of recent disturbances in the district.

"*Volete veder certi ritratti dei Re Inglesi?*" said some persons to me, as I was loitering in the Piazza awhile before *Ave Maria;* so I followed my friend to the Casa Forcella, where the Marchese or his brother, (one of them is in exile,) fairly astonished me by the display of a collection of original portraits, all of the Stuart Family; Charles I. and II.; James II.; the Pretender, Charles Edward; Duchess of Albany; and Cardinal York; the four last in all stages of their lives; most of these were miniatures and well executed, though carelessly preserved. There was also an old harpsichord which had belonged to the late Cardinal,—"*sommamente armonioso,*" according to Gentile, (a statement which, seeing it had no chords, I cannot confirm,) and against the wall hung a long pedigree of the Nortons of Grantley, one of whom, said my friend, "*è una zia mia, e sta presentamente, (vecchia però,) vicinissimo a Northampton ossia Nottinghamshire.*"

These reliques of our Monarchs (the last curiosities one would have searched for in the town of Città di Penna,) had passed from the late Cardinal York, Bishop of Frascati, by bequest to the Forcella, a female of that family having been about the person of the Countess of Albany.[a]

September 29th, 1843. This day I purposed to devote to Atri, (the ancient Hadria,)[b] whose tall towers, on a long ridge of hill, one never loses sight of in the neighbourhood of Citta di Penne. The clear sun-rise was soon overcast, and clouds foreboded rain as I walked, with the Syndic's groom, our old guide, to S. Angelo, over hills of clay, and through fields of stubble blackened with flocks of turkeys, fording three rivers before we arrived at the foot of the high hill on which this ancient city, now one of the many fallen and desolate, rears its neglected walls. Some Cyclopæan remains are near the entrance of the town, but alas! before I reached them it began to rain apace, and a September rain in these lands is a formidable matter: yet as far as I could judge, the walls seemed picturesque, and the view over the Adriatic and the Province of Teramo is most striking.

[a] Gentile. Quadro di Città di Penna.

[b] Cramer, i. 290.

The streets are particularly ill-paved and narrow, but some pretty Gothic vestiges caught my eye,

The Cathedral of Atri would well repay the trouble of a visit to an architect: it is one of the most perfect Italian Gothic buildings I have seen in the Abruzzi, and its interior remains unchanged, a rare circumstance. The Apse is covered with paintings in fresco, the date of which, as far as the little experience I have of such matters goes, may be the thirteenth or fourteenth century, and the whole of the walls have been similarly adorned, though age and damp have obliterated the greater part. A curious *Baldacchino* of carved-wood is also worthy of notice.

There was, however, little time for examination, nor could I either procure any drawing of the town, or visit the celebrated Latomie, or caves near it; owing to the heavy rain which continued to fall, and which obliged us to hasten homewards, as the rivers which take their rise in these mountains often become so suddenly swollen, as to render all progress impossible. Some beans and bread had been the only refreshment I could obtain at a very poor *Osteria* in this most forsaken city, so that I recommenced my walk by the yawning clay abysses which seam the hill-side, with a strong conviction that my visit to ancient Hadria had proved a failure. By *Ave Maria*, I had again reached Città di Penna, after a really fatiguing day's expedition.

September 30th, 1843. The clouds still hung heavily on the mountains, but I decided on starting for Isola, a little town at the foot of the Gran Sasso, the monarch of the Abruzzi, with which I longed to have a closer acquaintance. I left Città di Penne early. The whole of my day's journey was close to the high mountain-range, dividing the provinces of the Abruzzi 1° and 2° Ulteriori, and did not present any particular point of interest; nor, excepting Bacucco and Colle d' Oro, were there any towns or villages in our day's route, which lay among low wooded hills, overlooked by the dark-topped mountains beyond, or crossing the bed of streams which in winter must be formidable torrents. Towards evening, by paths winding through beautifully wooded landscapes we reached Isola, which stands on a peninsula formed by two rivers that nearly surround it. It is an exceedingly pretty place, and immediately above it rises



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the single pyramid of Monte Corno, the Gran Sasso, a most noble back-ground. (See PLATE XXVIII.)

Don Lionardo Madonna, to whom I had a letter, was extremely shy and uneasy, and seemed to think I might be a Bolognese rebel escaped over the frontier, until I relieved him by proposing to go at once over the Gran Sasso to Aquila, rather than await the risk of another fall of snow, which would block up the pass, and oblige me to return to the coast. This pass immediately over the shoulder of the mountain, is closed, except during the hot summer months, when it is used by the people of Teramo as the most direct road to transport the produce of their province, (wine and oil,) to Aquila.

Don Lionardo having illness in his own house, found me a lodging in a very unhappy-looking building, within whose forlorn walls I was nevertheless, after drawing the town, most glad to take shelter by a good wood-fire, for the evening was bitterly cold.

An old woman, Donna Lionora, (who like many I had observed in the course of the day, was a *gôitreuse,*) cooked me some beans and a roast fowl; —but the habitation was so dirty and wretched that one had need have had a long journey to provoke any appetite. While I was sitting near the chimney, (it had the additional charm of being a very smoky one,) I was startled by the entrance of several large pigs, who passed very much at their ease through the kitchen—if so it were called—and walked into the apartment beyond, destined for my sleeping room. "*Sapete,—che ci sono entrati i porchi?*" said I to the amiable Lionora. "*Ci vanno a dormire*" quoth she, nowise moved by the intelligence. They shan't sleep there while I'm in the house, thought I; so I routed them out with small ceremony, and thereby gave great cause for amazement to the whole of the family. "*E matto,*" suggested some of the villagers *sotto voce.* "*Lo sono tutti, tutti, tutti,*" responded an old man, with an air of wisdom, "*tutti gl' Inglesi sono matti,*" an assertion he clearly proved on the ground that the only Englishman who had ever been known to visit Isola (several years previously,) had committed four frightful extravagancies, any one of which was sufficient to deprive him of all claim to rationality, *viz.;* he frequently drank water instead of wine; he more than once paid more money for an article than it was worth; he persisted in walking even when he had hired a horse: and he always washed

himself "*si,—anche due volte la giornata!*" the relation of which climax of absurdity was received with looks of incredulity or pity by his audience.

October 1st, 1843. The Gran Sasso was perfectly clear, but his furrowed sides were covered with brilliant snow. No mules were to be had, for they had all gone to Aquila, to carry wine; but Don Lionardo Madonna informed me that there should be one at my service by eventide, and that if I set off after midnight I could accomplish the journey to Aquila in about thirteen or fourteen hours of diligent walking. I resolved, therefore, as there was little to interest me in the town of Isola, to pass my day quietly in the mountain.

What a scene of grandeur is that around Isola! The dark forest-clad slopes of the surrounding mountains contrasting with the brilliancy of their snowy tops, and these again backed by the cloudless blue of an Italian sky! The murmur of the two neighbouring rivers rolling over their stony beds in the deep valley beneath, or, from time to time, the remote and trembling notes of the *Zampognari*,[a] are faintly heard.

The sun sinks below the Gran Sasso, and only the silver lines of snow shine out from the deepening blue. The night-grasshopper begins her one low note: it is time to end my hill-ramble, and descend to Isola.

Before I return to my charming home, I am careful enough to buy a large hen for fifteen *grane*, which with a bottle of wine twenty-nine years old, the gift of Donna Lionardo Madonna, is to support me through the morrow; and Nicodemo, my destined guide, is also well cautioned to be in readiness at an early hour.

October 2, 1843. About three hours after midnight we set off, and as the light grew, the dark Monte Corno towering above us became every moment more magnificent. We journeyed on through a vale of fine oaks by the side of a river, and the scene reminded me of many a park in England. By sunrise, when the cold grey eastern side of the mountain glowed at once like a mass of ruby, we had mounted as far as the little village of Fano, beyond which we again crossed the stream we had so long followed, and rose rapidly

[a] Zampognari, or Pifferari, are the shepherds or bag-pipe players, *see page* 10.

by steep chalk-paths through beautiful forests of tall beech for three or four hours, and a more magnificent ascent I never enjoyed.

Three-parts of the way up, Nicodemo and I made our pic-nic breakfast, and then proceeded on our way over dazzling snow, but under a clear sky and warm sun. At length we reached the top of the pass, and bade adieu to the view towards the north, over the province of Teramo, which was more remarkable for extent than beauty. We exchanged it for a quiet plain, like that we had crossed on August 3rd, bounded by high walls of rocky hill, beyond which the snow-topped blue Maiella and dusky Morrone reared their distant heads. Long droves of jetty sheep were filing away to their winter-quarters in Apulia, (*see page* 9) and a few screaming falcons wheeled and soared above them. The tranquillity of these elevated pastures is extreme, and I well enjoyed a quarter-of-an-hour's rest by the side of a clear fountain.

Then we began our climb over the wall of this oasis, and at its summit the mountain map of the Abruzzi was again at our feet. A tedious coasting of hill, and a long, long descent down the steep face of the mountain, occupied three hours, when we arrived at Assergi, a little town with ruined walls, and a castle commanding a protracted and extremely narrow valley, the path through which leads by the side of a stream bordered with poplars to Paganica, another town in the great vale of Aquila, some two hours' walk from that city, which I reached about sunset. Here, at the previous invitation of Prince Giardinelli, I went straight to the *Intendenza*, and was sorry to find the Intendente suffering from severe illness. We had nevertheless an agreeable party in his rooms after supper, and little Donna Caterina was full of the wonders of Rome, from which she had just returned. I was also glad to find a letter from K., who happily had arrived safely at Tivoli, instead of having fallen down to Caduta delle Marmore.

October 3rd, 4th, and 5th, 1843. These days were passed in Aquila, where the air was now exceedingly cold, and its deserted streets seemed no livelier now that I walked them alone. Neither was there much gaiety at the *Intendenza*, for Prince Giardinelli was constantly ill, though he held levées every evening in his bed-room.

I made some drawings of Aquila, which it was not very easy to accomplish, partly because the great extent and scattered appearance of the city are obstacles to a general view of it, and partly because the hours of repast



SANTA MARIA DI SOCCORSO AQUILA

at the Palace interfered with the execution of much work. The best views may be obtained from the Madonna del Roio, and from the convent of San Giuliano.



OLD HOUSE IN AQUILA [1]

[1] This vignette represents one of the many old houses in Aquila remarkable for the variety of their Gothic windows, &c.

October 6th, 1843. After mid-day I set off to Montereale, as I wished to see the Amphitheatre of Amiternum, and, if possible, to make an excursion either to Lionessa or Amatrice from M^te^. Reale, where a brother of Cav. Ricci of Rieti, to whom I had letters, resided.

About two or three miles from Aquila a good carriage-road leaves that which goes through Antrodoco to Rome, and leads by uninteresting country to the village of San Vittorino, the modern representative of the ancient Sabine city of Amiternum.

Of this important place, though many remains of aqueducts, substructions, &c., &c., are to be traced, the ruined walls of an amphitheatre standing on the plain, are the most conspicuous vestiges. The modern San Vittorino, a mere hamlet, occupies an eminence that was perhaps the site of the ancient citadel; and the *campanile* of its church is almost entirely composed of fragments of inscriptions found in the neighbourhood.

The mountains beyond Aquila are a fine background to the view of Amiternum, but the general effect of the scene is barren and melancholy.

After pursuing our road below Pizzoli and Barete, two thriving villages profuse in scattered white villas, and having wound through a pass, we arrived in sight of some very prettily oak-wooded hills, and went through Marano, a town with something of the air of a Swiss village, whose wooden galleries were loaded with bright bunches of Indian corn exposed to dry. The branches of the Almond trees, which are plentifully cultivated hereabouts, are also similarly decorated.

Beyond this, though with an interval of more dreary road, Montereale appeared on a rather imposing hill, overlooking a semicircular plain, the mountain sides of which are studded with numerous little villages, near one of which, Mopolino, the Palazzo of D. Celestino Ricci gleamed forth with a welcome brightness in the setting sun, and I was glad when I had passed over the dull meadows betwixt it and Montereale, though, as a secluded plain, it is not wanting in character or beauty: the pointed head of the Gran Sasso, which I recognised as an old friend, rose above the hills on its east side, while, looking westward, the solid wall of the mighty Terminillo or Lionessa mountain shut in the view.

The town of Montereale is not of ancient date. It was one of the contemporaries of Aquila, and was frequently involved in quarrels with that turbulent city. In the fatal earthquake of January 14th, 1703,[a] it fell entirely, and the surviving inhabitants founded dwellings, or retired to villas on the hill sides around the plain, which have now become each the centre of a village, while the mother-town of Montereale remains in a decayed condition, scarcely containing seven hundred inhabitants.

Ere we reached Catignano, the village near which Mopolino stands, we overtook Don Celestino Ricci, to whom I presented my letter, and was received with all possible cordiality. His villa, or palazzo, is a spacious country mansion, with garden-terraces after the true Italian mode, very pretty, though wanting in that nicety of order so necessary to our English ideas of taste and



. AL. . . . ELEST.N RICC. MO·OLINO

comfort. The mistress of the house, a lady-like and handsome person, usually called *La Principessa*, was one of the Pallavicini, and narrowly missed inheriting the great estates of that family near Rome, which for want of male heirs, have now become the property of the second son of the Rospigliosi. The interior of their house is comfortably, though not luxuriously, furnished; the bedroom allotted to me was ornamented with excellent prints from the works of Raffaelle, Thorwaldsden, &c., &c.; and the bright moon silvering the waters of a fountain just below my window, contributed to make it a very pleasant lodging.

[a] Geo. Baglivi, Dis. p. 350.

There was a late family supper, at which the three children of Don Celestino, and one of his brothers, were present. My host was very full of information and good-humour, and my new friends impressed me very favorably.

Both Don Celestino and the Principessa were very full of the praises of the present Duchess of Hamilton's singing, the Duke having formerly passed a winter in the Palazzo Rospigliosi, where the Princess's family then resided.

October 7–8, 1843. I lingered two days at Mopolino; although there was very little variety in the quiet routine of domestic life, a good library of old Italian works, music, and the three merry little children, with their great white dog, *Dragonazzo*, were sufficiently amusing, and the hospitality of both host and hostess was very simple and charming. The Ricci, who possess a great part of the plain about Mopolino, have also a *casino* at Montereale, where they pass part of the vintage season. We visited the town, the shattered walls of which are of considerable extent; but at present this unfortunate place is reduced to a shade of its former prosperity.

October 9, 1843. I determined on leaving the Neapolitan dominions by way of the Marsica, postponing a visit to Leonessa and Amatrice to some future opportunity, so by sunrise I was on my way from Mopolino to Montereale, through which it is necessary to pass, and there the Giudice Don Andrea Rizzi, who had to sign my passport, superadded to his duty the refreshment of some very good *café*.

From the ascent above Montereale there is a fine view, and the Gran Sasso glittered in the sunrise like a crystal pyramid.

The greater part of the day was passed in walking through a succession of the dullest possible valleys, varied only by the scattered villages of Fano and Borbona, whose narrow streets are apparently more peopled by curs than human beings.

At Posta, an ugly little town at the junction of the three mule-tracks leading to Leonessa, Montereale, and Antrodoco, we arrived at the course of the Velino, which flows down the pass through which the ancient Via Salaria

was carried, and as we proceeded the scenery became finer at each step. We had not time, however, to examine the details of the Roman road, for it was getting late, but I was soon convinced that this approach to Antrodoco was far finer than that by which we had visited it on August 5th (*see page* 48). The sun set behind the lofty Terminillo as we passed Sigillo, and we followed as quickly as we could the mule track along the precipices near San Quirico, a ruined convent in the valley near Antrodoco, whose castle I was glad to hail once more, as it dimly rose above its gloomy fastnesses.

I found a home at the Casa Todeschini, whence I had begun my lonely tour on August 13, but the Bagnanti were gone:—no widows—no guitars; Antrodoco was shorn of its beams by the finishing of the water-drinking season. The Guidice Dei Pasquinis, also, to whom I went for the ever-requisite passport signature, was in bed, and disabled from rheumatism, resulting from the damp of Antrodoco, which, indeed, is one of the lowest and most gloomy of places when not lighted up by a bright summer sun.

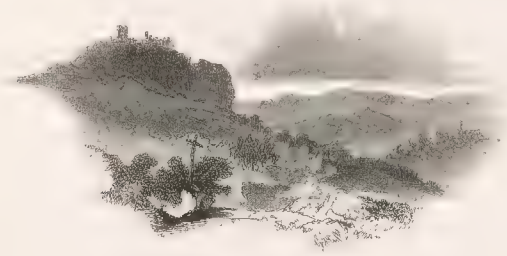
October 10, 1843. By sunrise I was already beyond Borghetto, and, climbing the long, long hill to Pendenza, which overlooks the whole vale of Cutilia to Civita Ducale and the plain of Rieti: Pendenza is at present a poor village, of which the only notice I can find is that it was thought of sufficient importance to have been taken and burned by Lalle Camponeschi, at the head of the Aquilani, in 1348.[a]

Thenceforward, throughout a long day's walk, it is impossible to imagine scenery of a more charming character: the richest oak and chesnut woods adorn the beautiful hills along whose sides lay my route, while below me was a wide valley, with a bright river gliding at the foot of many an eminence crowned with its village; on the other side of the vale were the mountains of the Roman territory, fringed with thick forests, glowing with every tint of Autumn, stretching away to distant purple hills.

At Staffoli, a ruinous looking town at the summit of a height clothed with fine oak, we began to descend to Petrella, a place of evil fame as the

[a] Cirillo, p. 33.

scene of the murder of Count Cenci, by his daughter Beatrice—a tale too well known, and of whose horrors enough may be found either in Shelley's tragedy, or Keppel Craven's tour, to satisfy the curious. Petrella (often called Petrella del Cicolano, to distinguish it from Petrella in the Valley of the Liris,) is one of the largest of the mountain villages in this district, and seems populous and thriving: it stands below a bold rock, on whose brow are the meagre ruins of the fatal castle where the parricide was committed. Had I been aware that the spot was associated with such remarkable inci-



dents, I should have made some drawings of it; but, very fortunately, its beauty induced me to secure a little sketch of its situation.

From Petrella to Colle Sponga, and thence to Mareri, the beauty of the hanging woods was exquisite, and the descent through magnificent oaks to the River Turano, which we forded, is really superb. Much of this part of the day's walk brought to my mind the scenery in the neighbourhood of Inverary.

From the Turano, we ascended to the little town of Pace, or Macchiatimone, the view from which over the Cicolano, is one of the most enchanting I ever beheld. Such glorious valleys of foliage, with rocky village-bearing knolls, such a panorama of forest scenery: such beautiful lines of wooded mountains on every side, with Borgocollefegato, Pescorocchiano, and many other towns of the Cicolano, nestled in their shady dells below:—so great a contrast to the severe barren scenery of the valleys of Aquila, or the tiresome cultivation of the district near the Adriatic.

Beyond this, after many a long up and down by chesnut-canopied paths, we struck into a dreary stony tract round the little town of Leofrini, and it was late ere we descended to the town of Tufo, where the Coletti family gave me as hearty a welcome as one could wish for.

October 11 to 16, 1843. All these days I passed very pleasantly, but rather idly, at the Baron Coletti's. Tufo consists of three villages (the united population of which may amount to one thousand persons): Tufo Alto, the smallest, on the brow of a hill; Tufo proper, a clean little town in the valley, and Villa Tufo, a third hamlet at a little distance. All the territory belongs to the Coletti, who also hold great possessions at Poggio Cinolfo, as well as at Castel Madama, and in the Campagna di Roma.

The family house at Tufo is one of the most comfortable throughout the Marsica, and the whole family (one of whom, the eldest son's wife, is daughter of the Ferrante of C. d'Antina,) are a pattern of the amiable and domestic. They have some good rooms in their residence, though from having been added to at different times, the Palazzo has no pretensions to architectural beauty; a good private chapel, and a pleasant garden, are part of its recommendations. Tufo, however, is not well placed as to prospect, or, I should be inclined to think, as to air, for I found it cold and damp. The Coletti are the only Abruzzesi I met with who make any approach to a breakfast, (and, after my stay with them, they always called it "*far colazione Inglese,*") sitting round a table to a repast of dry toast and *café au lait*.

One or two days during my stay were partly unfavourable as to weather, though, with this agreeable family, the time did not hang heavily, even indoors. In the fine mornings, I sketched the town from the chesnut-feathered hill opposite the house, or visited the little church where many of the Coletti family are buried, or made calls on the tenants, &c., &c. One day I went with Don Raffaelle Coletti to Pietra Secca, a small town two miles off, placed on a most gigantic rock, whose perpendicular height is as picturesque as fearful. Hundreds of falcons inhabit this stronghold, from the top of which you may see the cheerful plain of Cavaliere, for it is on the

borders of the Roman states. The *arciprete* of Pietra Secca was a fine old gentleman, ninety-one years of age, and as active and merry as if he were fifty.



PIETRA SECCA

Another day Don Luigi Coletti and I set out on horses to Valle di Vari, a great farm, or, more properly speaking, a large forest domain, of his father's, on the ancient possessions of an old Benedictine monastery, where we had an impromptu lunch in an old *casino*, and returned by evening to Tufo. The woods of oak and beech are extremely extensive, but the expense of transporting the timber through the Marsican district, or the difficulties of *Doganas*, towards the Roman frontier, would be so great as to prevent any repayment of the money laid out in felling it: so the beautiful forests remain untouched.

October 17, 1843. The weather had become cold and gloomy at best, and although I should have liked to have made drawings throughout the Cicolano, and in the neighbourhood of Carsoli; yet the season was becoming too far advanced, and, to tell truth, I was rather tired of wandering alone;

so I took leave of my kind friends the Coletti, with much regret, and set out towards Rome.

A short walk of four or five miles brought me to Carsoli, by which town we had entered the Abruzzi three months before, and thence my path lay across the Pianura di Cavaliere, and up to the picturesque little town of Riofreddo, the outpost of the Roman States, whence, passports and luggage being examined, I went on by La Spiaggia and Vico Varo to Tivoli, and the following morning to Frascati.

The romance of three months' wandering was finished. To the classic or antiquarian the ground I had gone over is rich in interest. To the landscape painter certain portions possess great beauty; but the greater part of the scenery is on too large a scale, and of too barren a character to be available for the pencil, while much can boast of only cheerfulness of cultivation as a compensation for downright ugliness. But apart from the agreeable variety of impressions so many new scenes had left on my mind, the number of really hospitable and kind people with whom I had become acquainted will ever be remembered by me with great pleasure; and should I never revisit this part of Italy, I shall not cease to cherish the memories of my stay in the three provinces of Abruzzo.

ILLUSTRATED EXCURSIONS

IN

ITALY.

No. III.

IN THE KINGDOM OF NAPLES, 1844.

SEPTEMBER 26th, 1844. I set out again for the Abruzzi, intending, during a stay of two months, to glean much from parts I had neglected, or had been unable to reach in former visits,—particularly several churches and convents in the three Provinces, and the country north of Monte Corno towards Teramo and Ascoli. There is a newly-established Diligence to Rieti, leaving Rome at 5 P. M., and making the journey in ten hours: not a bad conveyance.

A sultry night, but a bright moon made it pleasant till I fell asleep among the tiresome hills of Poggio S. Lorenzo;—at three after midnight we reached Rieti.

September 27th, 1844. — Set off to Antrodoco about nine, with as little encumbrance as possible, leaving my "*roba*"[a] at the inn in Rieti; my plan being to return there, thence to make the *giro*. of the Leonessa mountain, and so by Mopolino to Amatrice and Teramo, although to do this a passport-signature at Civita Ducale, the Capo-Luogo of the district, was before everything necessary.

[a] The word "roba" is a word of wide meaning in Italian conversation: it includes all kinds of travelling conveniences,—trunks, bags, &c., &c.

—Cattle fair at Rieti, the metropolis of the modern Sabines. All the roads thronged with sleek gray cattle decked with ribands, and long lines of peasantry streaming into the city.

A pleasant walk among the cheerful woody hills to the beautiful valley of the Velino, and before noon tumble-down Civita Ducale was once more reached.

There was our friend, Don Francesco Console, in the rambling Palazzo, as of old, though, Prince Giardinelli being now no longer Intendente, his affectionate hospitalities were modified into common-place politeness.

A sorry *Locanda* has been set up of late by some ex-servants of the *Sott-intendenza*, in the feeble hope of inducing passengers by the Aquila road to Naples, to halt there for the night: it consists of an unpropitious-looking five-bedded room, and a kitchen, in a remote part of a straggling Palazzo in the High-street, and has a forbidding appearance inside and out, so that I was glad, after a *colazione*, (not such a bad one, though the inn was so uninviting,) and having drawn some Gothic windows, &c. about the Piazza, to go on my way. Civita Ducale seems more ruinous and deserted, and helpless than ever, and one feels the lighter on quitting it.

About two I welcomed the fine, but gloomy hugeness of the vale of Cutilia, and the forlorn church of San Vittorino, nearly surrounded by lakes and little streams, which are always bursting forth in unexpected spots, to the great damage of the building, now nearly undermined, and only supported by props of timber. It is built on the site of the martyrdom of the Saint who was Bishop of Amiternum during the reign of the Emperor Nerva.

I left the road a mile further on, below the little town of Paterno, to see its lake, *Pozzo di Ratignano*, said to be unfathomable,[a] and called the centre of Italy, its distance from Ostia being seventy-six miles, and the same from the Adriatic.[b]

Numerous remains of Roman work on all sides mark the situation of Cutilia,[c] an ancient Sabine city, and in later times greatly frequented for its mineral waters by the Roman Emperors. Here Vespasian died.[d] A large mass of brickwork on the hill-side is called the ruins of his Palace, or by some the baths of Titus.

[a] Del Re, vol. ii. p. 230. Cramer, vol i. p. 317.

[b] Cramer, Anct. Italy, vol. i. p. 318.

[d] Ibid. vol. i. 318.

The lake is a sheltered and rather cheerless oval of dark clear water; Paterno standing immediately above it, with all its olive-slopes reflected



L GO I PATERNO

below: the banks nearest the road are flat, enlivened by groups of women drying hemp, a process best observed from as great a distance as possible, for the sake of one's organs of smell.

The Via Salaria passed close by the lake, and Guattani speaks of several portions of it as in good preservation. I had no time to look for them.[a]

There is a second little lake close by with deep foliage-covered banks, but I could see nothing in either of the floating islands mentioned by the ancients.

As for the third lake, which is on the right hand side of the road as you go towards Antrodoco, it is only some fifty years old, somebody's vine-yard having one evening most unceremoniously fallen to pieces with a great noise, leaving in its place, for the astonished owner, an ugly black chasm full of water.

At *Ave Maria* reached Borghetto, and half-an-hour later, Antrodoco The hill above the town seemed more vast and tremendous than ever in the gray of evening; no outlet between the fearful walls above and on each side, you seem to have entered a place beyond which there is no journeying, and from whose mountain jaws there is no retreat.

The Velino brawling over its white waste of stone; the bridge, and the narrow streets; and the old dull Piazza with its blue-mantled women flitting to and fro; and then the Casa Mozetti, to which, there being no inn, I forthwith went.

[a] Guattani, v. ii. 272.

[b] See Plate XIV.

Don Luigi Mozetti received me with the usual kindness of these good people, and supper was by no means unacceptable. · Our party was the father and two sons only, la Signora Mozetti and the other females of the house becoming invisible after having placed the first dish in form upon the table

September 28th, 1844. By day-break I was above the Castle of Antrodoco, and on my way to the pass of Sigillo, the most interesting part of which was to be sketched before returning to Rieti, and that most easily from this side, since the last few miles from La Posta are far less fine.

All through the sullen valley of San Quirico, the few remains of whose ancient Abbey are turned into a *Vignarola's* dwelling; the vines are thickly bespattered with patches of lime. This is also the practice all through the vale of Borghetto, &c., where the grapes when nearly ripe are sprinkled with lime to prevent their being plucked by passers by.

The morning was gray and cloudy; bye and bye it became black and grisly, and torrents of rain began to pour; but being determined on my object, I walked or ran through the frowning pass as far as Sigillo, where I remained till the rain ceased, and then sketched my way back again.

Sigillo, the ancient Sigillum, six miles from Antrodoco, is a frightful place: why it was ever built one cannot guess; or why, being built, anybody lives there. It stands in one of the wildest parts of the pass, (the whole of which is of the grandest character,) at the foot of crag and precipice, and is wholly uncomfortable to look at. A few vineyards by the side of the Velino, goats climbing among the toppling rocks, announce your approach to habitations—a nest of high-roofed melancholy abodes, in jeopardy from the mountain above, and the torrent below.

The ancient Via Salaria runs here through the very heart of the mountains, close to the Velino, which rises in the district of C. Ducale, about thirty miles above Rieti, receiving twelve streams in its passage from Fano and Borbona to Antrodoco.[a]

It is hardly possible to conceive anything more extraordinary than this portion of that great work, the Via Salaria; one while supported by massy stones

[a] Del Re, vol. i. p. 231. Guattani, vol. i. p. 61. The Velino is called Mellino in several Farfa documents.

rising from the river's edge, then carried by the most formidable rocks along the brink of precipices cut into sheer walls to admit its passage; it zigzags across the torrent, (the foundations of the Roman bridge alone remain,) runs giddily at a great height above it, or compels the angry waters into a narrow channel, by walls yet partly existing after two thousand years of wear and tear from earthquake and inundation. In some places the course of the old road is quite obliterated by loose stones which have rolled from the mountains above, in others, the great blocks which formed its substructions, are tossed about as if they had been pebbles. Here you follow a narrow mule track over fragments shivered by the fall of some vast mass from an overhanging rock; there you cross a little opening, where, through a narrow valley you catch a glimpse of the lofty Terminillo, or his surrounding heights, already tipped with snow or folded in rolling clouds; from his sides of many channels in spring and autumn descend furious streams, blotting out all work of man as they spread downwards to the rapid Velino, and recording their passage by a desolate broad tract of bare white stones.

Of the several cuts in the rock to allow of the formation of the old road, that about five miles from San Quirico is the most remarkable, being a perpendicular height of one hundred *palmi*.[a] About five feet from the bottom is a space where, until lately, a tablet remained, with an inscription of the time of Trajan, which is given below. "This," says Galetti, "was carried to Antrodoco," but I could not hear of it there.

This gigantic remnant of man's work in so wild a solitude, has a strange effect: nor is it wonderful that the peasantry attribute all these stupendous monuments to diabolical agency: one Cecco di Ascoli,[b] a learned doctor and engineer, who repaired the road under Carlo, Duke of Calabria, is the luck-

[a] Guattani, vol. ii. p. 267.

[b] Ibid. vol. i. p. 35.—

"IMP. CÆS. DIVI.
NERVÆ. F. NER
VA. TRAIANUS
AUG. GERMAN.
DACICUS PONTIF
MAXIMUS. TRIB
POTEST. XV. IMP.
VI. COS. VII. SUB
STRUCTIONEM. CON
TRA TABEM MONTIS
FECIT.

less mortal charged by popular opinion with having availed himself of such unhallowed means.

So much for this part of the Via Salaria: it is certainly one of the most impressive of the Roman roads, from the grand scenery through which it has been constructed by that wonderful people. Yet I cannot say I was sorry to be out of it, nor, indeed, to be fairly away from Antrodoco, for there is something constrained and mournful in the never-get-out-again feeling those gloomy passes invariably beget; so after an early dinner with the Mozetti, off once more to Rieti.

Before starting I visited the judge, Dei Pasquinis, whom I had known last year; he had become a cripple, poor fellow, from constant rheumatism, a complaint he attributed to the damp of Antrodoco, which, to say truth, looks as if it never had been, or could be, very dry: putting aside its low situation, and the want of free circulation of air, the danger to which it is exposed from the frequent and sudden inundations of the Velino, makes it by no means a desirable residence.

"*Mi spinge la curiosita,*" said Signora Pasquinis "*di sapere per chi porta lutto?*" These people always *will* know who you are in mourning for.

Nothing particular happened in the walk back, except being wet through by storms of rain; but at Civita Ducale a three-parts drunken *carabinière* prevented my entering, insisting on knowing my name, which I not only told him, but politely showed him my passport, which was one from the Foreign Office in 1837, with "Viscount Palmerston" printed thereon in large letters, "Lear" being small, and written. "*Niente vero,*" said the man of war, who seemed happy to be able to cavil, "*voi non siete Lear! siete Palmerstoni!*" "No I am not," said I, "my name 's Lear." But the irascible official was not to be so easily checked, though, knowing the power of these worthies, I took care to mollify his anger as much as might be." "*Quel ch' è scritto, scritto è: dunque, ecco qua scritto Palmerstoni:—dunque siete Palmerstoni voi.*" You great fool! I thought; but I made two bows, and said placidly, "take me to the Sott' Intendente, my dear sir, as he knows me very well." "*Peggio*" said the angry man, "*tu! incommodare l' eccellente Signor Sott Intendente? vien, vien subito: ti tiro in carcere.*"

Some have greatness thrust upon them. In spite of all expostulations, Viscount Palmerston it was settled I should be. There was nothing to be done,

so I was trotted ignominiously all down the High-street, the *carabiniere* shouting out to everybody at door and window, "*Ho preso Palmerstoni!*"

Luckily, Don Francesco Console was taking a walk and met us, whereon followed a scene of apologies to me, and snubbing for the military, who retreated discomfited.

So I reached Rieti by dark, instead of going to prison.

October 2nd, 1844. After a pleasant stay of three days among the kind Ricci, Vecchiarelli, &c., I set out at earliest morning from Rieti to enter the Abruzzi again, Lionessa being my first day's destination; man, and donkey for baggage, my companions.

A gloriously bright day, and clear above, though the plain of Rieti is now, (as whenever I have crossed it at early morn,) in thick fog, through which one walks mile after mile without seeing anything but the farm-houses near the road-side, which are particularly graceful and pretty, and mostly with picturesque dove-cotes attached.

Everything is rural and tranquil about Rieti; such flocks of sheep and turkeys—such heaps of yellow gourds at all farm-doors—such groups of peasants going to market, threading the "dewy vale"[a] by the rapid Turano.

Passed the Fiume Susanna, a reedy stream flowing through a marsh where bad air abounds; then, leaving Aquileggia on the left, (a little town perched on a hill, apart,) we came to the Fosso of Vedutri, to the Archpriest of which town Cav. Ricci had given me an introductory letter, begging him to provide me with one to Lionessa.

The Fossa of Vedutri is a ravine of bare rocks, through which runs a stream, and up which you must wearily make your way till you reach Vedutri, an uninteresting, but clean little town at the top of all things.

No end of going up to arrive at the town-gate, by a corkscrew staircase road, the less pleasant that at every ten paces one encounters a slow donkey with two large *Bigonze* full of grapes; if you go inside these you are squeezed flat against the horrid wall; if you take the outside, your fears are excited in the most lively manner by the prospect of an immediate fall down the ravine.

[a] Cramer, i. 315

The Canonico Leoni lives at the top of Vedutri, in a good-looking house. The *Arciprete* was sitting in his *sanctum-sanctorum*, making out his accounts; a good sort of old gentleman, though a little partaking in appearance of the character of the medley of things about him,—literary, domestic, and agricultural;—bottles, bundles, much linen hanging casually on walls and chairs, books and papers, tallies or cut pieces of wood to mark the peasants' work, two ploughs, baskets, kittens, &c., &c., &c. He gave me a letter to the Vicar-General of Spoleto, in Leonessa, and regaled me with coffee and toast, after which, while my donkey was refreshing himself, we discoursed on various subjects, the topic nearest the worthy Canonico's heart being the loss of income derived from the leeches, for which the lakes of the plain of Rieti are famous: these lakes are his property, and he had given permission to a company of Marseillais leech-merchants to come thither a leech-fishing, and by means of slices of meat and long poles they had left the poor Canonico leechless: this, he contended, was not a fair way of taking them, the orthodox mode being to sit with your feet in the lake till you catch sufficient.

About eleven, off once more, and now began the ascent of the high range of mountains forming one side of the Vale of Rieti, and known all over the *Campagna* of Rome as, la Montagna di Lionessa,[a] called so because it is within the territory of the little City of that name. Much difference of opinion has arisen among antiquaries as to the ancient name of these high barriers, the loftiest part of which, Terminillo, is 6567 Paris feet above the level of the sea;[b] Tetricum, Severus, Fiscellum and the Gurgures mountains have been by turns considered as the Leonessa range,[c] though the latter seem more clearly identified with it; to this day the glens and little plains among its fastnesses are celebrated for their pasturage.

Winding slowly up the mountain, the view increases in beauty at every step: the whole vale of Rieti, with its many lakes, the Gorge of Terni, and, higher yet, the hills of Spoleto and plains beyond. Most delicious was the pure air, the morning brightness. Either to look forward, where the mountain began to be feathered with clumps of noble beech, or back to the long lines of country, even to Monte Fiascone, was a constant delight. There is

[a] The mountain of Leonessa forms the background to the view of Rieti. See Plate XV.

[b] Guattani vol. i. 85.

[c] Del Re, vol. ii. p. 233, Cramer, i. 321.

a double pleasure in going over ground you have so long known at a distance only, (for I had drawn the Leonessa mountain continually in the Roman Campagna, and for years had longed to visit it,) and in finding, step by step, the real qualities of so old an acquaintance.

Great forests stretch away all over the huge sides of this beautiful mountain, and shelter numbers of wolves and roe-deer. Bears have not been known there of late years.

What a walk! such rocks and velvet turf! such green hills, crested with tall white-trunked woods, like those in Stothard's paintings! Such hanging oaks, fringing the chasms deep below your path! Such endless flocks of sheep in the open glades!

At a turn of the mule-path, through a sombre vale, we met a single capuchin,—the only creature throughout the day,—with a silver white beard below his girdle: a most merry old monk, who laughed till the tears ran down his face, because I would make a sketch of him. "*Morrò, morrò, chiuso in un saccoccio! Vado in Inghilterra dentro un libro!*" Long after I walked on, the old man's noisy merriment showed that his perception of the fun was undiminished.

Hour after hour followed of park-like wood: the red fallen leaves and the graystone reminding me of many a spot in old England. (*Mem.* One advantage of having a man with a slow donkey—more time for writing notes.) Towards the back of the mountain, a northern aspect,—shadows and cold wind prevailed, and dreary barren slopes of rock succeeded to the merry woods: a long descent brought me at last to the plain of Leonessa, and soon after to the city itself, than which, at the foot of its finely-formed wall of mountain, few objects are more striking. (See PLATE XXIX.)

Leonessa, (or Lionessa, for the name is spelt in both ways,) seems to have been built about A. D. 1252, under the patronage of the Emperor Frederick II. —four towns, according to Guattani[a] and others, having united to make a single city. There is little to be found concerning its history. Pachichelli[b] and Fra. Lean. Alberti make mention of its strong fortifications, and its

[a] Guattani, ii. 235.

[b] Pachichelli. p. iii. 68. Like many of the towns near Aquila, it had frequent contests with that city: and about 1450, one Gentile of Leonessa is frequently mentioned as one of Alfonso's most skilful generals.

general splendour, and that it was originally called Gonessa, or La Gonessa. It is situated in the diocese of Spoleto, and that of Rieti.[a] Charles V. bestowed it on his daughter Margaret of Austria, and it possesses one of the four institutions founded by her for the benefit of poor orphans.[b] Twenty-six villages are dependent on it, or united with it. At the present day its only title to celebrity is in its manufacture of a sort of cream cheese called *cacio fiore*, which is very excellent. On the 14th of January 1703, it was not spared by the earthquake, which devastated all the northern provinces of the kingdom of Naples: all the walls fell, and the greater part of the city was ruined: one thousand of the inhabitants were killed, and as many severely injured.[c] Owing to its situation in two bishoprics of the Ecclesiastical States, its greater facilities of communication with Rieti than with other towns, and to the whole of its flocks migrating with their shepherds to the Roman Campagna, from October to May, when the country round the Terminillo is deep



S. PIETRO DEGLI AGOSTINIANI. LIONESSA

[a] Giustiniani. [b] Ibid. v. 275. Del Re. [c] Georgii Baglivi, p. 350.



LIONESSA

in snow, Leonessa, though in the kingdom of Naples, is, in almost all respects essentially Roman. Shut out from the world by a circle of hills, scarcely passable in winter, the little city looks forth from her immense mountain background on her tributary villages scattered below; and a cheerful prospect it is, though rather chilling, from being so enclosed by lofty heights.

The entrance to the town is by a picturesque Gothic arch, combining strikingly with the solemn mountain ridge above, and a castle on one of its lower crags. The streets are narrow and clean, and the look of the place is rather Swiss or North Italian—roofs steep, &c.,—though some long lines of convents are quite in the style of Southern Italy, and very beautiful in form.

But little trouble was given me at the *Dogana*, and so I went to my host the vicar of Spoleto, a hospitable old man. A lame old lady, his sister, showed me my room, a place of such combined magnificence and filth, that I was glad to escape to the town to sketch. There are several



S. MARIA FUORI DELLA PORTA. LIONESSA.

churches with gothic doorways, more or less perfect; *San Pietro degli Agostiniani*, date A.D. 1467, and *Santa Maria fuori della porta*, A.D. 1352, were

among the most sketchable. But the cold, as evening approached, drove me back to my host's house.

The supper would have been agreeable if it had not been for the old lady of the house, whose conversation was of the oppressive order, being strictly confined to a detailed description of the dislocation of her hip during the preceding Autumn, on which unpromising subject she was peculiarly fluent. The whole account she gave about five times in the course of the evening, and every time she came to the resetting by an unskilful surgeon, by whom she was "*rovinata,*" and "*sagrificata,*" she performed what she was pleased to call the "*strilli e convulsioni,*" with so alarmingly natural an effect, that a huge house-dog rushed wildly into the room in a paroxysm of sympathy at every repetition, and joined in the chorus, just as, no doubt, he had thought it his duty to do on the original occasion. As for me I sat grinding my teeth in patience.

October 3, 1844. The whole of the early morning passed in hard sketching. The inhabitants seem a simple good sort of people.

No man and mule at eleven, as had been arranged on the previous evening, and long waiting ensued, during which they repeated the eternal "*mo,—mo viene*" every five minutes. My hostess also did the "*strilli*" once more, besides telling me all her family affairs, specifying the amount of her dowry, and recapitulating all the good and evil qualities of her departed husband. After much storming and entreaty, the mule and man were ready—but not, alas! before two o'clock, though I had wanted to reach Mopolino by nightfall.

There is a grand view of Leonessa, as you leave it towards La Posta, of which I had had no idea: but there was no time to stop for drawing, and we hurried along through the majestic pass behind the Terminillo range, whose sides are here wooded nearly to the summit, until we reached the high ground above La Posta, whence my old friend the Gran Sasso was seen towering with all his clouds and snows.

At Posta, the most dreary and dirty of places, the Giudice, to my horror, was not in the town, so that I could not have my passport signed, with-

out which precaution it is a folly to move in these provinces, since the first *gendarme* you meet has a right to make you return to your last sleeping place, if your *Carta di Passo* be not "*in regola.*"

On, therefore, I went with trembling for three miles, when I met the Judge returning, who, with many apologies, caused me to go back with him, seeing I should surely be stopped at Borbona, the next village. "*L' inchiostro ci l'ho,*" said I. "*Ma il sigillo ci manca,*" quoth he—so back I went.

An extra walk of six miles! when one had scant time to reach Mopolino by dusk, even then!

The Passport being done, and Don Federigo Pasqualucci, the Giudice, having regaled me with some *vinocotto,* (to which a draught of assafœtida would have been preferable,) on we went again, with an extra guide, for a short cut, to Fano, by Bacugno, up steep hills, whence were glorious views of Terminillo, as the sun, alas! went down, and along the stupid vale of Fano, with its scattered hamlets and snapping curs: then came pitchy darkness, and we felt gropingly our long way up the steep ascent above Montereale.

At the top we went altogether wrong, a matter the more distressing as the lights of Mopolino were glimmering afar off, before our very eyes. Yet, if we went forward, we slid into a ravine or a hole, or we sidled into copses and bushes, or into ponds, or over crags, in a fashion alike destructive to limbs, patience, and wearing apparel. And this state of things lasted for two unhappy hours, in the jet-black night; the donkey kept perpetually falling down, and the guide bewailing the coming certainty of our utter destruction by legions of rabid wolves.

After diligent examinings, we somehow struck into a path which led us to the Capuchin convent, and so to the suburbs of Montereale, whence the friendly Giudice Rizzi sent a guide with us over the quiet plain to Mopolino.

Though late, nobody was gone to bed. Good Don Celestino and the Principessa were as cordial as ever, and the comforts of my room were fully appreciated after the day's fatigue,

October 5, 1844. Yesterday passed quietly with the *famiglia* Ricci, only leaving the house to go as far as Catignano, an adjacent village, whose church,

built on the strong walls of an ancient Benedictine monastery, is very picturesque. To-day I set off at sunrise, with a guide, to Amatrice, intending



CHURCH OF CAMIGNANO

to return to Mopolino after having explored those parts. I can only say of the walk there that it is wofully bare and ugly,—the plain of Montereale, with hamlets here and there, and a vale of monotony rising to Arrigo, a dirty little town full of drying Indian corn, and alive with dogs, pigs, and fowls.

Then came more dull valley and a long ascent, at the top of which was compensation for all in a fine view of the valley of the Tronto, with Amatrice on a ridge in the centre. To the left the lofty Sibilla, seven thousand three hundred Paris feet above the sea,[a] near Norcia, commands the landscape; and opposite are the great mountains of Pizzo di Sega, and Pizzo di Moscio, of which Fra Alberti says, "they are too big to be either drawn or described."[b] On the whole, from a want of wood, the prospect is rather imposing than agreeable. (See PLATE XXX.)

But after passing Nemici, and crossing the infant Tronto, the deserted

[a] Guattani, i 85.

[b] F. L. Alberti, p. 262.



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walls of Amatrice, once a considerable city, became interesting on a near approach; a forlorn mouldering place, wasted by earthquakes and dissensions.

Ill-paved streets conducted me to the Palazzo of Don L. Ameliorati, the Giudice or Governor (to whom Don G. Rizzi had given me a letter): a friendly and gentlemanlike man, who sent a servant with me to lionize the town, warning me to be back in time for dinner.

The origin of the city of Amatrice is attributed, but on no good ground to the Samnites:[a] whatever its age, I am not aware of its appearance in history until the thirteenth century, when it seems to have been the constant rival of Aquila. I could hear of no antiquities in the place or its environs, except a subterranean road from the town to the valley, and some remains of the Via Salaria in the adjacent vineyards. The vestiges of a much more ancient road, which has passed perhaps from Amiternum to Ascoli, are still, it is said, to be traced along the high mountains to the east of the Tronto.[b]

In 1316[c] the Amatriciani united with the Ascolani to subdue Aquila; but the Aquilani being strongest, Amatrice was sacked and burned. For this Aquila was mulcted by King Robert in thirty-six thousand ducats, a fine afterwards commuted to twenty-four thousand. In 1318 a rebellion in Amatrice incensed the King so much that the Aquilani were ordered to destroy the city of their old enemies, which by fire and sword they almost utterly accomplished, no doubt with a very good will. In 1528 Amatrice was taken and held by Gian Giacopo Franco, for the King of France, but was retaken and again sacked by Prince Philibert, under the Emperor Charles V.,[d] who bestowed the principality, in 1538, on Alessandro Vitelli, at which time it contained twelve hundred and sixteen families. In 1606 it passed by marriage to the Casa Orsini.[e]

In 1638 and 1703 Amatrice was devastated by earthquake: in the latter year the greater part of the city was entirely destroyed, and a great portion of the population perished, many hundreds being buried alive:[f] this calamity the ruinous walls and churches, and the mournful appearance of the whole place, sufficiently attest to this day.

At present the population of Amatrice is very scanty, and of a very

[a] Del Re, vol. ii. p. 236. [b] Martelli, vol. i. p. 122. [c] B. Cirillo, p. 18.
[d] Pachichelli, vol. iii. p. 59. [e] Giustiniani, vol. i. p. 174. [f] Georgii Baglivi, p. 350.

fluctuating character, since the greater part of the men go to Rome as *camerieri* and grooms, while those of the suburban villages migrate annually with their flocks to the Campagna of Rome.

Forty-five *casali*, or hamlets, are dependent on this fallen city, whose five gates, and once strongly fortified walls, yet raise a voice in testimony of its past importance. It is in the diocese of Ascoli.



S. FRANCESCO. AMATRICE.

Amatrice contains several churches of interest; in some of them are paintings by Cola dell' Amatrice;[a] these are, however, mostly retouched, so as that little of the original remains. The *apse* of San Francesco is gothic, the rest modernized: Sant' Agostino, date 1428; both have gothic doors, but parts of the *facciate* have been replaced after the earthquake. Some tall towers, or *campanili*, are picturesque, and remind one of Lombardy; that in the market piazza more so than any.

Returning to the Casadel Guidice, I found a most admirable dinner awaiting, at which were present all his family, and very nice people they were. The wines of Capestrano are beyond praise.

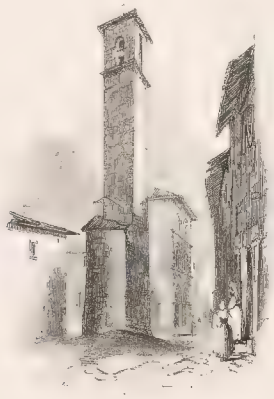
All my afternoon went in hard work, interrupted only by being obliged to visit a miraculous image of great sanctity, which, though only shewn once a year, they did me the honour, as a stranger, to exhibit to me. My day-

[a] Cola dell' Amatrice resided chiefly in Ascoli del Piceno, in the 16th century. Lanzi, History of Painting in Italy, vol. ii. p. 386.

light I wound up by a ramble about the walls and ravine, a joyless wild sort of scenery, frowned at from a purple cloud, which capped the lofty Sibilla as the sun went angrily down.



Played till supper time with my host's merry little children, and the evening would have ended pleasantly but for rumours of suspected persons



TOWER IN THE PIAZZA OF AMATRICE.

T

having made their way over the frontier, and having been seen near the town.

A report of two or three frantic Dragons casually supping in the vicinity could not be half so horrible as that of passportless persons moving about the Kingdom of Naples, especially when supposed to have escaped from trouble-brewing Bologna. So the town was alarmed, the rural guard mounted round it all night, the Judge foreboded, and Signora Ameliorati, having already lost some relations in the last disturbances of one of these unquiet petty places, wept amain during great part of the night.

October 6th—10th. Having changed my first intention of visiting Civita Reale, the birth-place of Vespasian, I returned by yesterday's dull journey to Mopolino. Here, in the vain hope of passing by the Gran Sasso to Teramo, did I patiently wait through three days of rain and storm: the 10th of October saw me on my way to Aquila, having taken leave of the kind and hospitable Ricci with regret.

All is bustle just now in these parts, as everybody, except the sick, the aged or infant, among the labouring classes, migrate during this month, to the Campagna of Rome. On the day of departure the women and children accompany the emigrants to some spot near the frontier, where a sort of Bacchanalian *fête* solemnizes their *adieux*.

The villages of Marano, Barete, &c., and the classic site of Amiternum were old acquaintances (*see page* 113). Aquila, spacious and melancholy, I reached at sun-set.

October 10th—20th, 1844. These days I passed in Aquila, hoping for finer weather, now and then tantalized by a day of sunshine, though the morrow was surely wet, so that after several disappointments, I finally decided to return to Rome, leaving the Teramana unexplored, my churches undrawn, and my good Marsican friends unrevisited. Meanwhile, my luckless stay in Aquila was enlivened by the kindness of the Ricevitore Generale, Marchese Spaventa, to whom Don C. Ricci had furnished me with an introduction, and

who lionized me all over the city, scarcely leaving a scrap of Gothic architecture unshewn; the church of San Domenico, the barracks on the site of Frederic the Second's palace, Gothic *cortili* and houses, Santa Chiara, containing a series of beautiful little paintings on wood, representing the life of the Virgin,



WINDOW IN S. DOMENICO. AQUILA

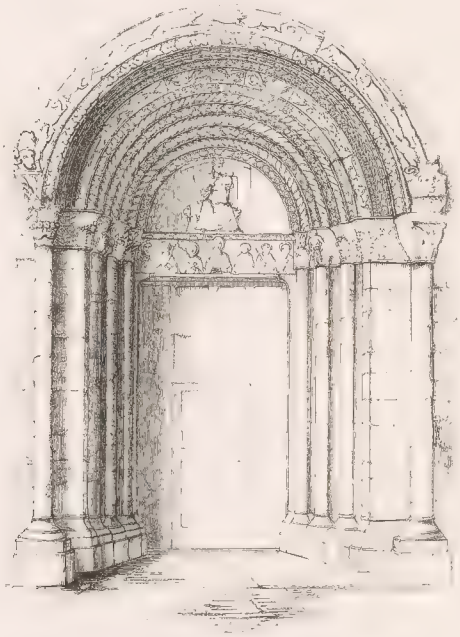
the beautiful *facciata* of San Silvestro, the castle built by Charles V., 1535, and commanding all the city of Aquila, an old tomb of the Camponeschi, and doors and windows *ad infinitum*.



CASTLE OF AQUILA

Under porticoes or an umbrella I persevered greatly in sketching, and spite of the rain carried off much of what I wished to possess.

The *Riviera,* or great fountain, of Aquila, is curious; it was built in 1272,[a] and is a quadrangular court of red and white stone, surrounded by ninety-nine little fountains, each, it is commonly said, representing one of the communities which were originally united to form the city. The *Riviera* is generally crowded with washerwomen.



BASCHAL DOOR OF S MARIA [illegible]ACA..ICA. A[illegible]ILA

One day, while drawing the church of Collemaggio, I talked with an intelligent Padre Guardiano of the convent attached to it. He informed me that the painter of the beautiful animal pieces round the walls, (representing the life of San Benedetto,) was a Flemish monk, Andrew Ruter, a pupil of Rubens.

Here is kept the skull of San Pietro Celestino, secured under eight keys,

[a] Del Re, vol. ii. p. 149.

four of which are in the possession of the City authorities. It is shewn publicly once a year, and has a square hole over the left temple, said to have been made by the nail which caused his death. That evening, the 11th of October, was the only very fine one I was so fortunate as to enjoy in Aquila. As I strolled to the Cappuccini, I thought I had seldom seen a grander prospect, overlooking the plain and castle of Ocre, and the vast Maiella beyond, dimmed by floating clouds. Over all the Gran Sasso reared its pointed head in perfect clearness.

On the 13th an hour of bright weather tempted me towards Vettoijo, supposed to be, though on slender grounds, the site of Pitinum.[a] Wide flocks of turkeys speckled the plain as they slowly moved on to Rome, from the districts of Lanciano, Chieti, and Penna. They advance by daily journeys of eight, ten, or twelve miles. Vettoijo itself is but a mill, near a lake choked up with reeds, and in a damp hollow, replete with poplars. Above it is an elevated position, certainly like the site of an old city, with one solitary ruin, part of a tomb or temple, yet standing. This antiquaries enlist as a proof of their conjectures, though it looks much like the *avanzi* of some Roman villa to inexperienced eyes.

October 14th. The day promising to be tolerably fine, I set out to Civita di Bagno, proved beyond doubt to be the ancient Forcona by many inscriptions, &c.; a walk, not of the liveliest, leads one to this place in about an hour and a half.[b] Forcona was the seat of a Bishopric in the early ages of Christianity: under the Lombards, by whom it suffered greatly, but was not destroyed,[c] it became the head of a Contado. It has been known as Civita di S. Massimo from its cathedral, and later it was called Bagno, from a collection of little villages, the united inhabitants of which may amount to one thousand or fifteen hundred.[d] The city of Forcona was, however, fallen, and its population removed to Aquila before the fourteenth century.

[a] Cramer, vol. i. p. 338.
[b] Cramer, vol. i. p. 339. Del Re, vol. ii. p. 152.
[c] Guattani. vol. i. p. 98.
[d] Giustiniani.

Quantities of brick ruins, scarcely rising above the ground, are scattered on the hill-side, and all around the desolated church of San Ranieri, which has been rebuilt from the wreck of the old cathedral. It still has marks of former magnificence, both in its extent, and in the fragments of cornices, inscriptions, &c., inserted in the walls. There is little to interest in the neighbourhood, the view over the plain, with Aquila on its ridge, and the high boundary wall of Monte Corno on the opposite side excepted.

Then I strolled on through a little village, (where everybody was polluting the evening air with hemp,) towards the town of Fossa, before arriving at which, the convent of Sant' Anna di Ocre provoked me to open my sketch-book.

Fossa is in a secluded nook between high mountains, and has many grand features of situation, though not containing any object of particular interest. The modern town stands above the site of Aveia, an ancient city of the Vestini,[a] the ruins of which are widely scattered over the low ground hard by. A very learned, but rather dry, dissertation has been written by Signor Giovenazzi,[b] fixing, most indisputably, the position of Aveia.

Once more I essayed to go from Aquila to Teramo, and had arranged with a guide to sleep at Pizzoli the first, and at Montorio the second night, but lo! when morning came, pouring torrents once more forbade the attempt: a sad disappointment after spending so much time and money. So not to be again deluded, I hired a coach at once to Rieti, and proceeded thence immediately to Rome.

[a] Cramer, vol i. p. 338.

[b] Della Citta di Aveia ne Vestini. Diss. di V. M. Giovenazzi, 1773.

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APPENDIX.

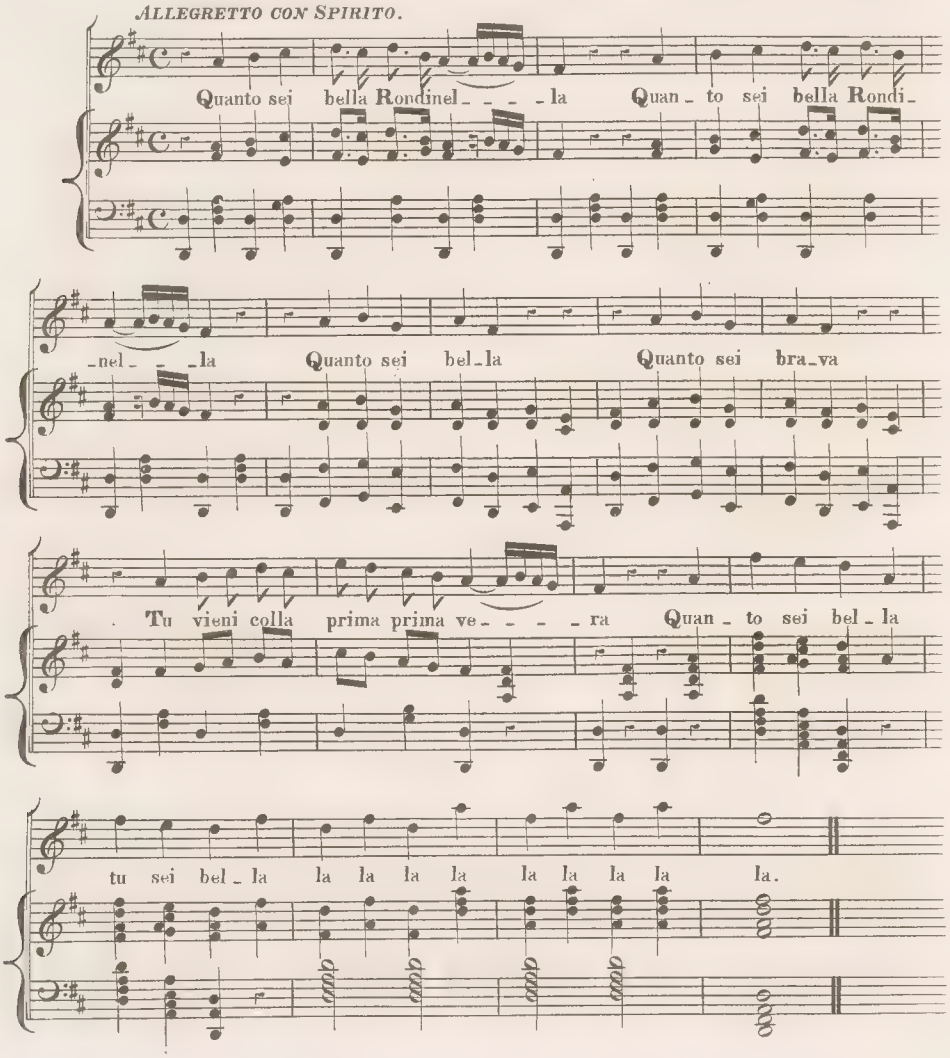
No. 1. (*see Excursion 1. page 10*)

The following air is generally known as that of the Pifferari, because at Christmas time it is played on the Bagpipes before the shrines of the Madonna in Rome. The shepherds who perform it in that city are most frequently from the neighbourhood of Sora, in the Province of Terra di Lavoro, but it is in common use throughout all the mountains of the Abruzzi, where I have learned it from many shepherds. The first part is usually repeated 4 or 5 times: the last is played but once. The music of this air is said to be of great antiquity.



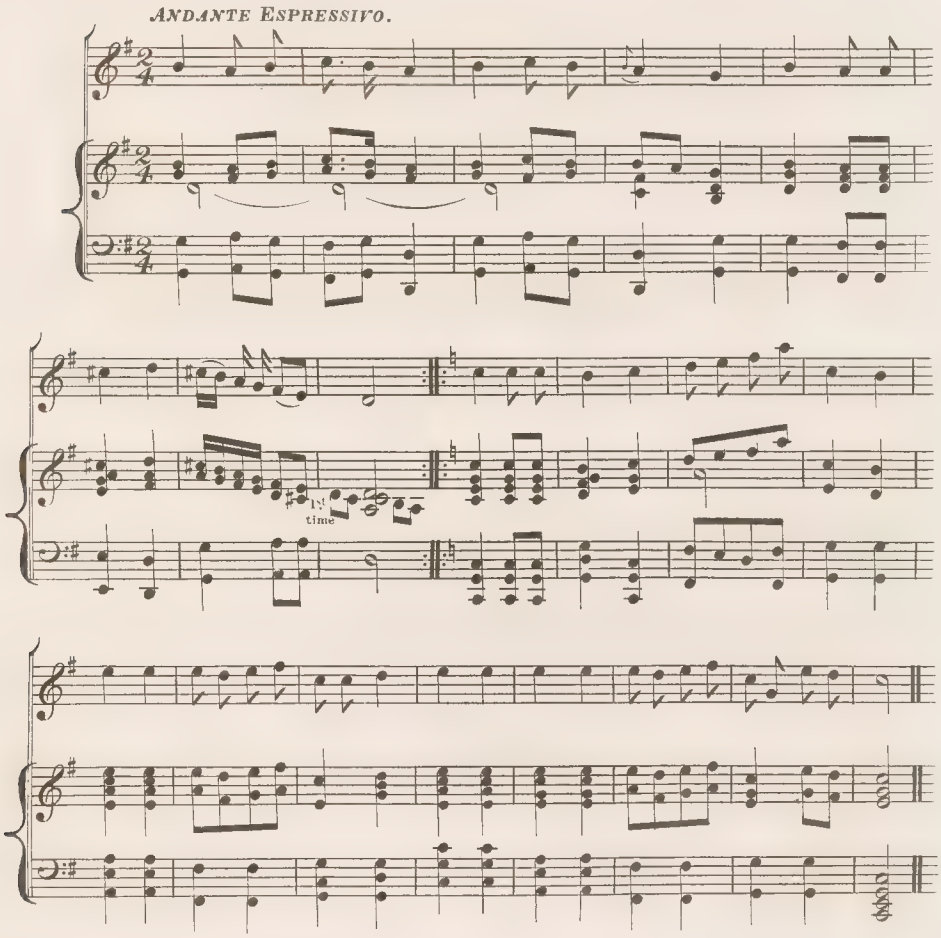
No. 2. (*see Excursion 2. page 56*)

The following is a song to the swallow much in use among the peasantry:– I learned the notes at Civita Ducale but they are sung with more or less variation elsewhere.



No. 3. (*see Excursion 2. page 66*)

The following chant, was, as nearly as I can remember, that sung in the Piazza at the Fête of Tagliacozzo.



No. 4. (*see Excursion 2. page 94.*)

Chant sung by the Pilgrims in the Pass of Anversa.



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